

## **Victoria County History of Cumbria Project. Draft parish/township histories**

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Parish/township: AINSTABLE

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Date of draft: 22 July 2024.

# **AINSTABLE**

AINSTABLE lies on the east side of the river Eden, some ten miles south-east of Carlisle and four miles due east of Low Hesket. The modern civil parish of Ainstable was formed in 1934 from the ancient parish of Ainstable, part of the parish of Croglin, and part of Cumwhitton. That part of Croglin parish which lay north-west of Newbiggin was detached and added to the parish of Cumrew.<sup>1</sup> The boundaries of the ecclesiastical parishes remained unchanged. The main settlement is the village of Ainstable, which can be accessed from the A6 by crossing the river Eden via Armathwaite Bridge.

## **Boundaries**

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<sup>1</sup> CAS (C), C/C/307, Cumberland Review Order 1934, Map 7, Ainstable and Croglin Area.

The historic township of Ainstable was coterminous with the ancient ecclesiastical parish of the same name. It extended from the river Eden at Holme Wrangle up Northgill to the boundary with Cumwhitton at Broomrigg then followed that boundary down Walmoor Sike to Croglin Water, down that beck to the river Eden and then downstream to Holm Wrangle. The township encompassed an area of 4,433 acres.<sup>2</sup> It included the village of Ainstable, the hamlets of Ruckcroft, Dale, Longdales and Armathwaite Bridge End and scattered farms and small holdings.

## **Landscape**

Ainstable lies in the Eden Valley which is described as a classic example of the landscape and geomorphological features caused by rifting. Formed in the Permian period, the Vale was in-filled by sediments laid down in both deserts and under water.<sup>3</sup> Penrith Sandstone inter-lain with flash flood deposits is exposed at Coombs Clints on the east side of the Eden Gorge. At Croglin Water the sandstone is covered by Eden Shales which extend to Ruckcroft and north to North Gill.<sup>4</sup> North-eastwards the bedrock changes to St Bees Sandstone under Harras (220 m. OD) and Broomrigg. Superficial deposits of Till cover most of the parish with thin coverings of gravel and sand west of Towngate.<sup>5</sup> The Eden Gorge cuts through the bedrock beginning approximately one km north of Eden Bridge in Lazonby, and ends at Armathwaite

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<sup>2</sup> OS 6" Map, Cumberland, Sheet XXXII (1868 edn).

<sup>3</sup> BGS: <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/Policy-and-Media/Outreach/Plate-Tectonic-Stories/Vale-of-Eden>

<sup>4</sup> [https://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php/OR/14/041\\_Geology\\_and\\_hydrogeology\\_of\\_the\\_Eden\\_Valley](https://earthwise.bgs.ac.uk/index.php/OR/14/041_Geology_and_hydrogeology_of_the_Eden_Valley)

<sup>5</sup> BGS: <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>

Mill where the igneous intrusion of the Armathwaite Dyke forms a weir as it crosses the river.

The gorge is a SSI.<sup>6</sup>

From Croglin Water the land rises to a height of 220 m. north of Ruckcroft and continues as a ridge to a maximum of 229 m. north-east of The Harras. Above the Eden gorge the land rises steeply through Coombs Wood to a height of 183 m. and then gently declining to 148 m. at Longdales from whence it falls northerly to 100 m. at Powsy Sike and 70 m. at Broad Beck mill. The church stands a little below the 154 m. summit of an isolated hill above North Gill.<sup>7</sup>

Soils in the central belt from Broad Beck to Croglin Water are mainly clayey loam with areas of impeded and free drainage, they are slightly acid and sandy eastward towards Croglin and along the Eden north of Armathwaite bridge. An area of free draining, very acid soils of very low fertility occur over Coombs Wood.<sup>8</sup> Except for Wall Moor Sike which rises in Broomrigg plantation and runs east to Croglin Water, springs run west to the Eden and occur where the free draining soil meets the bedrock noticeably at Chapel Well, Redgill, Kitty Frith's Well, Basco Dyke, Keldhouse Well and behind Vicarage Farm. Waterhouse Sike rises in Broomrigg and runs westerly joining Powsy Sike running through the centre of Ainstable becoming Hall Beck below Ainstable Hall and continues in a small wooded gorge before entering the Eden near Oaklands Cottage.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx?startTopic=Designations&activelayer=sssiIndex&query=HYPERLINK%3D%271001499%27>

<sup>7</sup> Height and place-names: <https://explore.osmaps.com>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes>

Woodland, apart from Coombs Wood which is a forestry plantation managed by Forestry England and the plantations of Broomrigg and Redgill, is confined to the sides of the river Eden and valley becks and the steep slope between Cross House and Redgill.

## **Communications**

### *Roads and Bridges in Ainstable before 1701*

Little is known about roads in Ainstable before 1600. Large areas east of the Eden were open waste and commons and travel was on foot or horse-back along routes most convenient for local purposes by the shortest distance and ease of use. Pack horse trains were used for transporting goods.

Thomas Denton, in his list of significant bridges in Cumberland in 1687, included Langwathby and Warwick bridges over the River Eden, but not Forcemill bridge at Little Salkeld which had fallen in about 1650.<sup>9</sup> Armathwaite bridge was not built until 1701 (see below). There was a ford called Peatwath at the northern edge of the township near Holmwrangle.<sup>10</sup> In the accounts for Lord William Howard, in February 1612, payments were made to a number of ‘pore’ people in Armathwaite including a woman at Peatwath.<sup>11</sup> At

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Denton, *Perambulation of Cumberland, 1687–1688, including Descriptions of Westmorland, the Isle of Man and Ireland*, ed. Angus J.L. Winchester and M. Wane (Surtees Soc., vol. 207; CWAAS Rec. Ser., XVI, 2003), 57.

<sup>10</sup> W. Nicolson, *Border Laws*, 230; OS 25 inch Maps, Cumberland, Sheet XXXI.8 (1861–1952 edns); *Naworth Estate and Household Accounts 1648-1660*, ed. C. Roy Hudleston (Surtees Soc., Vol. 168, 1958), 154.

<sup>11</sup> *Selections from the Household Books of The Lord William Howard* (Surtees Society, vol. 68, 2018; via Forgotten Books), 55.

Peatwath there were boat owners who would ferry pedestrians; Lord William who held the manor of Thornthwaite near Shap in Westmorland, paid twelve pence in March 1613 to the Armathwaite ferry ‘coming from Thornthwaite’,<sup>12</sup> in June paid seven pence for ‘Ferry at Armathwaite for the gentlemen.’ and for ‘x loades of coles going to Thornthwate xd.’<sup>13</sup> In June 1621 the boatman at Peatwath was paid three shillings when ‘Mrs Mary (youngest daughter of Lord William) went to Mrs Howard’.<sup>14</sup> Also in 1621 eight shillings was paid to the warriner for twelve journeys to Peatwath.<sup>15</sup> Otherwise no record of any authorised and publicised service survives. Without such help, travellers to Carlisle would need to walk or ride downstream about ten miles to Warwick Bridge, five miles east of Carlisle although there was also a ford three miles downstream at Brocklewath.<sup>16</sup> Travellers to Penrith would need to travel eight miles upstream to Forcemill Bridge, about five miles north-east of Penrith.<sup>17</sup>

Without crossing the river Eden, the people of Ainstable could choose between two market townships: Brampton granted a market and fair in 1252 about 12 miles north of Ainstable, and Kirkoswald granted a market and fair in 1201 about four miles south (three miles from Ruckcroft).<sup>18</sup> For travel from the village of Ainstable to Kirkoswald there was a choice of two roads from the village crossroads. One road passed east of Bascodyke and close to Ruckcroft, down a steep hill pass the nunnery and crossed Croglin Water by a wooden bridge, known as

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid* 50.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid* 61.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid* 180-1.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid* 182.

<sup>16</sup> W. Nicolson, *Border Laws*, 230; OS 25 000; *Place-Names*, I, 78–79.

<sup>17</sup> After the fall of Forcemill bridge, and until 1701, the route to Penrith would be over Langwathby Bridge, about 20 miles.

<sup>18</sup> Brampton: *Gazetteer*; 63, but no source; CAS(C) DHN/c/9a/3, grant of market to Lord William Howard, 3 Dec 1606. Kirkoswald: *VCH Cumbl: Kirkoswald and Renwick*, 45.

Croglin Low Bridge or Nunnery Bridge (this bridge was rebuilt in stone in 1701).<sup>19</sup> The other road left the cross roads and ran southeast to Broomrigg and Bramery and onto Dale where it crossed Croglin Water into Staffield township.

The route to Brampton went west from the village crossroads to Row, north to the northern boundary of the township on Broadbeck where there was a ford and then onto Cumwhitton, Carlatton and Brampton. An important track from Ruckcroft led to Dale and a ford over Croglin Water served a track continuing towards Renwick, now marked on the OS as a ‘way accessible to the public’.

A proposal to build an entirely new crossing of the River Eden at Armathwaite was first mooted in Cumberland Quarter Sessions in 1694, and the following year a Grand Jury proposed a bridge ‘at Peatwath or Armathwaite over the River Eden in the roome of a former bridge called Forcebridge’. The magistrates agreed and ordered three county purveys to be raised for the purpose.<sup>20</sup> In 1697, when the grand jury were obliged to present to Quarter Sessions the calamitous news that the new bridge was ‘fallen and carried down the river’, it was said that ‘the country have great necessity of having the said bridge.....it being the high road from Newcastle, Hexham, Brampton &c to Penreth, Ireby, Cockermouth and other market towns in this county ....’.<sup>21</sup> This road followed the east bank of the river Eden to ‘Holme to the fiord of Peatwath and Wrangle.’ In 1700 the magistrates ordered a rebuilding,

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<sup>19</sup> CAS (C), Q/6/1, p. 177.

<sup>20</sup> CAS (C), Q/1/1, 1695, unnumbered pages.

<sup>21</sup> CAS (C), Q/1/2, court in session October 1697, 32.

and five purveys to be raised to pay for it.<sup>22</sup> The second, single track bridge was completed in 1701 at a cost of £715 for which nine and a half purveys had been raised.<sup>23</sup> The bridge carried an inscription ‘This Bridge was built att the promotion of Charles, Earl of Carlisle (his said lordships, the Earl of Sussex and the City of Carlisle being benefactors) and the charge of the County. It was begun Anno Dom 1700 and finished Anno Dom 1701. Lancelot Simpson, undertaker. Edward Addison, Workman’.<sup>24</sup> Armathwaite bridge, is a Grade II structure of three rounded arches with two splayed cut waters, a fourth smaller arch in the west bank probably is a flood overflow.<sup>25</sup>

### *Road and Bridges After 1701*

The modern secondary road from Lazonby bridge through Kirkoswald, Croglin and Castle Carrock to Brampton does not pass through Ainstable, and there are no major roads in the western half of the modern parish of Ainstable. The construction of Armathwaite Bridge in 1701 led to the improvement of the road to Holmwrangle (in Cumwhitton), and thence through Carlatton to Middle Gelt Bridge and Brampton. In 1757 it was declared by the magistrates in Quarter Sessions to be ‘the only high road to be repaired by the inhabitants of Ainstable in future’.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> CAS (C), Q/6/1, 130 and 135.

<sup>23</sup> CAS (C), Q/6/1 380.

<sup>24</sup> CAS (C), DAY/6/34.

<sup>25</sup> NHLE no. 1327027; above, Roads and Bridges After 1701.

<sup>26</sup> CAS (C), Q11/1757/3/1/27.

The Ainstable Inclosure Award (1821) set out 13 public carriage or driving roads of a width 33 ft. ‘over and upon the commons’, 47 private or occupation roads of width 15 ft. to 24 ft. and eight public footpaths of four to six ft. in width.<sup>27</sup>

In 1907, after damage to Armathwaite bridge by traction engines, an emergency committee of Cumberland County Council reported that ‘the bridge required very extensive repair and, in any case, should be widened’.<sup>28</sup> The contract went to Thomas Lant who rebuilt it in 1907/8, for about £5,000, to carry a two-track road. In 2024 it mainly serves local traffic and because of the height of the land on each side of the river, Armathwaite bridge is less vulnerable to flooding than Lazonby bridge and Warwick bridge. It is a useful alternative when those bridges are temporarily unusable.

### *Public Transport*

Carriers were recorded in local newspapers from 1836. Thomas Byers of Towngate, who was fined in 1876 for cruelty to his horse (an overloaded cart), carried to Penrith and Carlisle until 1890.<sup>29</sup> William Chicken of Street House advertised a service to Penrith on Tuesdays in 1885/6; from 1890 Michael Sanderson Beatty was advertising a Tuesday service from the Red Lion inn visiting villages in a five mile radius; when he died in 1897 his service was resumed by Francis Duers until 1902.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Inclosure Award, Schedule.

<sup>28</sup> Minutes of Cumberland County Council Highways Committee, 1907, pp. 451–52 and 513–14; CAS (C), C/C/18/89 is a design plan of the new bridge, 1907, showing the width of the original bridge.

<sup>29</sup> *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*, 1 Apr. 1876.

<sup>30</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 4 Jun. 1870; *Penrith Observer*, 23 Dec. 1890 and 29 Dec. 1894; census enumerations.



Edward Lancelot Proud started a bus service to Penrith in 1921, and in 1929 was licensed by Carlisle City Council to provide a bus service from Warwick Road Carlisle to Ainstable and Croglin via Heads Nook. This was later extended by the Traffic Commissioners to include Newbiggin, Cumrew, Carlatten and Cumwhitton, with service twice a day.<sup>31</sup> The service was purchased by Ribble in 1938, and in 2024 a service is provided by the Fell-Runner company.

Opportunities for travel for residents of Ainstable was greatly improved when a station at Armathwaite opened on the Carlisle to Settle Railway in May 1876.

## SETTLEMENT, POPULATION AND BUILT CHARACTER

### Settlement

The name Ainstable is a compound of Old Norse *einstapi*, ‘bracken’ and **hlið**, ‘slope’.<sup>32</sup> The earliest recorded spelling *Ainstapelid*. occurs in the *Pipe Rolls* of 1178 and then in various forms until the 18th century, John Denton spelling it *Ainstaplight*, Thomas Denton *Aynstaplith* and the modern form appearing in Nicolson and Burn.<sup>33</sup> Ruckcroft is first recorded as *Rucroft* in the *Pipe Rolls* of 1211 appearing in that form as late as 1723, the suggested meaning is ‘rye croft’ from ON **rugr**, croft.<sup>34</sup> Dale which comes from ON **sadr**,

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<sup>31</sup> CAS (C), DX/844, timetable 1932.

<sup>32</sup> *Place-Names*, I, 168.

<sup>33</sup> *VCH Cumbl.* I, 349; *John Denton’s History of Cumberland*, ed. Angus J.L. Winchester (Surtees Soc., Vol. 213, 2010), 86; Denton, *Perambulation*, 323; N&B, II, 429.

<sup>34</sup> *VCH Cumbl.* I, 410; *Place-Names*, I, 169.

‘valley’, appears as *del dale de Ainstapelth* in 1230.<sup>35</sup> In 1346 it is recorded as ‘Hamelton in Aynstapelth called ‘le Dale’ in the parish of that town.’<sup>36</sup> Longdales probably contains OE *dál* ‘share in common land’.<sup>37</sup> Armathwaite Bridge End seems to have gained its name after the bridge was built in the late 17th century and has been regarded locally as part of Armathwaite village ever since.

### *Early Settlement*

No evidence for occupation in the Mesolithic and Early Neolithic has been discovered in the township. Pollen analysis at sites further south in the Eden Valley at Temple Sowerby and Great Rundale, indicates that after the retreat of the ice in 10,000 BC to 8,000 BC, the lower escarpment of the Pennines to the river Eden was predominantly open grassland with developing scattered shrubs and trees.<sup>38</sup> Both sites produced finds of worked flints indicating the presence of probable hunter-gathers and it is reasonable to suppose similar studies of downstream areas between the Eden and the Pennines would have show similar results.

There was human settlement in the Bronze Age at the complex of monuments in Broomrigg Plantation (200–205 m. OD) where survey and excavations were carried out in 1934, 1948-9 and 1950.<sup>39</sup> The area had been rough pasture and heath before the plantation was created and

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<sup>35</sup> *The Lanercost Cartulary*, ed. J. M. Todd (Surtees Soc., 203 & CWAAS, Rec. Ser. 11, 1997), no.73.

<sup>36</sup> *CCR 1346-49*, 30.

<sup>37</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C1/5; *Place-Names*, I, 169–70. Also occurs in the 1841 Tithe Award as a fieldname in the Kirkfield north of the church, *see cf.* Townfields

<sup>38</sup> C. Skinner, ‘Reconstructing and Recognising Prehistoric Landscapes: A New Case Study from Eastern Cumbria’, unpublished Phd Thesis, Leicester University, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> K. S. Hodgson, ‘Notes on Stone Circles at Broomrigg, Grey Yauds, etc.’, *CW2*, 35 (1935), 77–9; K. S. Hodgson and Rev Harper, ‘The prehistoric site at Broomrigg near Ainstable: the excavations of 1948–49’, *CW2*, 50 (1950), 30–42; K. S. Hodgson, ‘Further excavations at Broomrigg, near Ainstable’, *CW2*, 52 (1952), 1–8.

evidence of field-dykes and plough riggs was noted. An undecorated ‘pygmy cup’ usually found in early Bronze Age burials was recovered together with a cinerary urn.<sup>40</sup> Different dates in the Bronze Age are suggested for the structures and finds, the large megalithic stone circle being the earliest.

The Broomrigg complex and particularly the megalithic stone circle is part of a string of Prehistoric monuments that runs from Long Meg near Little Salkeld to Grey Yauds on King Harry in Cumwhitton and shows that people were in area from the Late Neolithic: further evidence was the discovery in a field near Ruckcroft of a cup and ring stone or portable decorated stone similar to two decorated stones found at Little Meg.<sup>41</sup> For the later Bronze Age there are two random finds of axes in Ainstable.<sup>42</sup>

A possible Iron Age/Roman site at Edenbank in Ainstable is based on documentary evidence.<sup>43</sup> There is firmer evidence of an Iron Age/Roman enclosure and farmstead north of Ainstable Hall identified by aerial photography, a geophysical survey of the site was conducted in 2020 and features consistent with at least one round house were identified.<sup>44</sup> Before and after the invasion and occupation of Britain by Rome in 43 AD the local tribe were the Carvetii whose territory included the Solway Plain, the Eden Valley, part of the Lune

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<sup>40</sup> Pygmy cup, a small ceramic vessel in a range of shapes, but typically less than 50 mm high, found in early Bronze Age burials in northwestern Europe, usually in association with an urn of some kind. Also called incense cups and accessory vessels. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Archaeology*. A cinerary urn was used in cremations.

<sup>41</sup> S. Beckensall, *Prehistoric Rock Art in Cumbria*, 127–28, plate 25.

<sup>42</sup> HER Cumbria, 17753, 741; T. H. McK. Clough, ‘Bronze Age metalwork from Cumbria’, *CW2*, 69 (1969), 33.

<sup>43</sup> HER Cumbria. 43582.

<sup>44</sup> Eden Heritage, *Land at Towngate, Ainstable, Geophysical Survey*, December 2022.

valley to the Tebay Gorge and possibly extended to Annandale in Scotland.<sup>45</sup> Their Romanised centre was at Carlisle.<sup>46</sup>

Place-Name evidence indicates that the language of most people in north-west England was British or Cumbric which survived in Cumbria until its absorption into the Angle-Saxon kingdom of Northumberland in the early seventh century and Anglo-Saxon became the dominant language. In the ninth and tenth centuries Norse settlers who came from the east over Stainmore further modified the language. There are no Cumbric place-names in Ainstable although Cumwhitton seven km to the north-west, Carlatton and Cumrew to the north have names of British origin.<sup>47</sup> Further evidence of people of Norse origin in the immediate area was found at Cumwhitton when in 2004 a 10th century Viking cemetery was excavated.<sup>48</sup> This is the only second known Viking cemetery in England and is important evidence for Scandinavian presence west of the northern Pennines and within the area of Ainstable.<sup>49</sup> There is no other evidence of human occupation in Ainstable until Henry I granted it to Adam Fitz Swein and the first mention as a place in the *Pipe Rolls* in 1178.<sup>50</sup> The

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<sup>45</sup> N. Higham and B. Jones, *The Carvetii* (1991).

<sup>46</sup> D. Shotton, *Romans and Britons in North-West England* (Lancaster University, 2004), 4–5; D. Breeze, ‘Civil Government in the North: The Carvetii, Brigantes and Rome’, *CW3* 2008 63–72; C. Ross, ‘The Carvetii – A Pro-Roman Community?’ *CW3*, 12 (2012), 55–68.

<sup>47</sup> *Place-Names*, I, xxi; John Todd, ‘British (Cumbric) Place-Names in the Barony of Gilsland’, *CW3*, 5 (2005), 89–102.

<sup>48</sup> *Current Archaeology*, 294; *Oxford Archaeology North, Historic England (2015) A Viking-age cemetery at Cumwhitton, Cumbria*. York (Archaeology Data Service, <http://doi.org/105284/1031499>; accessed 3/11/23). Fiona Edmonds. *Gaelic Influence in the Northumbrian Kingdom*, 213–14.

<sup>49</sup> It is not clear if the burials are contemporaneous.

<sup>50</sup> Below, Landownership.

Benedictine priory of Ermathwaite for nuns was founded around or before 1200 AD.<sup>51</sup> The parish church is first recorded in 1291 but must have existed before 1200.<sup>52</sup>

Aerial photographs show complex earthworks and areas of rigg and furrow and a hollow way in a field immediately to the north of Nunnery which may be associated with the nunnery.<sup>53</sup>

There is no record of a manor house although one document, a copy of an earlier one tentatively dated to 1485–88, mentions a tower.<sup>54</sup>

### *Later Settlement*

The centre of Ainstable township developed along the four roads leading from the cross roads at Beckside approximately 450 m. south of the church. The earliest map of 1774 shows Ainstable Hall, the church, Nunnery, the settlements of Ruckcroft and Dale and the isolated farms of Bramery, Faugh-Head, Beck, Bascodyke, Harras, Dike and Slack. There are cottages along the track west of the church (Towngate) and possibly near Aimbank.<sup>55</sup> The small settlement of Longdales is not on the 1774 map, although the first record is in 1634 and again in 1642 when the manor court roll mentions ‘two cottages at Longdale.’<sup>56</sup> It is shown on the 1821 Inclosure Map and the OS 6” map of 1868.

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<sup>51</sup> Gervase of Canterbury, *Mappa Mundi*, ed. W. Stubbs, II, 441; *VCH Cumbld*, I, 189. Dissolved 1537.

<sup>52</sup> Below, Religious History.

<sup>53</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/>

<sup>54</sup> CAC (C), DHN C201. Handwritten and appears to be an 18th century copy of an earlier document; below, Built Character.

<sup>55</sup> CAS (C), CA/6/19, Thomas Donald, *Map of Cumberland 1774*. Note the publication Thomas Donald, *Historic Map of Cumberland 1774* (CWAAS, Rec. Ser., XV, 2002) divides Ainstable between sheets 3 and 6 missing a small section of the township.

<sup>56</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/5 (Ainstable manor court rolls: earliest mention 1634; ‘two cottages at Longdales’ 1642).

In 1821 Townhead, Bell House, Bank, Towngate, Harras, Far Harras, Far Shields, High Bramery, Low Castle Dike, High Field, Cross House, Car Holme, Common House, Field Foot, Red Hill, Rowhead, Ainstable Row, Aimbank and Armathwaite Villa appear on the Inclosure Map.<sup>57</sup> There are buildings at Beckside and north towards the vicarage with Church Garth Stile named, the school is shown on the road to Broomrigg and buildings along Towngate. The land around the cross-roads land immediately south-east of Beckside was uninclosed. Additional buildings shown on the 1868 OS 6" map, are the Dun Cow and the Crown Inn in Ainstable, the Crown Inn at Ruckcroft and a smithy on the road to Broomrigg and another in Towngate. In 1913 the Post Office is shown on the road to the vicarage. By 2024 Far Harras, Castle Dike and Field Foot were in ruins and the inns and Post Office closed.<sup>58</sup> Council houses were built in 1951 and 1954/5<sup>59</sup> and subsequently new houses and bungalows in-filled vacant plots or replaced earlier cottages on Ainstable Row, and the road to the vicarage.

At Ruckcroft in 2024 there are modern bungalows as well as older buildings and two farms built of red sandstone. On the road to Ainstable, Crown House was once the Crown Inn and a little further on Rose Farm is no longer a working farm. Dale is a hamlet of a farm and four houses, two of which are Grade II, next to Croglin Water. It is first recorded in personal names in grants to Lanercost Priory in 1223×1256. Armathwaite Priory owned four

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<sup>57</sup> CAS (C), QRE/1/28.

<sup>58</sup> Personal observation by H. Hawkins.

<sup>59</sup> Below, Local Government.

tenements in Dale two of which had fire houses.<sup>60</sup> Longdales is a small hamlet with red sandstone-built cottages dating probably from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. On the Inclosure Map, fields south of the hamlet have the appearance of divisions of a common field, and on the Tithe Map of 1841 two of those fields have the name Dale.<sup>61</sup> It is most likely that the name Longdales derives from an open field.<sup>62</sup>

The buildings at Bridge End at the east end of Armathwaite bridge, are grouped around the Fox and Pheasant Inn, previously the Red Lion. Armathwaite Manor was originally called Armathwaite Villa but also at different times Armathwaite Hall and Armathwaite Place.<sup>63</sup> Close by the inn is a row of cottages and on the corner of the road to Nunnery on land once called Coal Bank where there was a coal depot, is the converted United Methodist Chapel of 1889. Bridge End although within the parish of Ainstable, where there is a boundary stone for Ainstable Low Quarter opposite the Fox and Pheasant, always seems to have been regarded as part of Armathwaite.

## **Population**

Intermittent warfare with Scotland, and cross-border raiding between 1290 and 1600 render unsafe attempts to estimate population before 1600. Returns for the Lay Subsidy for 1332 record 46 taxpayers with a total worth of £105 18s. 2d. in movable goods of which a fifteenth

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<sup>60</sup> *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. John Caley, Sir Henry Ellis & Rev Bulkeley Bandinel (1844), vol 5; printed in Harry Hawkins, *Records of Armathwaite Priory*, (in preparation.).

<sup>61</sup> CAS (C), DRC/8/3.

<sup>62</sup> *Place-Names*.

<sup>63</sup> Below, Built Character.

was £7 1s. 2d.<sup>64</sup> The number of for tax-payers places the ‘vill’ among the wealthier villages in Cumberland. Households in the countryside with goods worth less than 10s. were exempt and assuming they constituted two thirds of the households in the vill there were approximately 129 households. Using multipliers of 3–4 per household give an estimated population of between 380 and 517 persons.<sup>65</sup> The Black Death in 1348–9 may have reduced this by up to a third: Sir Richard Denton, sheriff for Cumberland from 16 April to 29 September and lord of the manor of Ainstable,<sup>66</sup> in his excuse for his small returns to the Exchequer says ‘the great part of the manor lands, attached to the King’s Castle at Carlisle’ had remained until 1354, ‘waste and uncultivated by reason of the mortal pestilence late raging in those parts.’<sup>67</sup> By 1568 the population seems to have recovered, with an estimated figure of 356.<sup>68</sup>

Table 1

Year	Population
1332	380-517 <sup>a</sup>
1568	356 <sup>b</sup>
1642	298 <sup>c</sup>
1688	360 <sup>d</sup>
1781	522 <sup>e</sup>

<sup>64</sup> C. M. Fraser, ‘The Cumberland and Westmorland Lay Subsidies for Cumberland and Westmorland 1332’, *CW2*, 66 (1966), 131–158; this includes only the return for Westmorland that for Cumberland can be found in ‘Cumberland Lay Subsidy: Lith Ward’, in *Cumberland Lay Subsidy Fifteenth and Tenth, 6 Edw. III*, ed. J P Steel (Kendal, 1912), pp. 1–16 (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/cumberland-lay-subsidy-edw3/pp1-16>; accessed 16 Nov. 2023).

<sup>65</sup> Based on *Kirkoswold and Renwick*, 8; ‘English Medieval Population: Reconciling Time Series and Cross Sectional Evidence’: [https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/seminars/seminars/conferences/venice3/programme/english\\_medieval\\_population.pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/seminars/seminars/conferences/venice3/programme/english_medieval_population.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> Below, Landownership.

<sup>67</sup> Gasquet, *The Great Pestilence (AD 1348-9)*, 118–9; Summerson, *Carlisle*, I, 280; TNA, E 159/130, Michaelmas *Recorda* rot. 15.

<sup>68</sup> TNA, LR2/212, survey of 1568; estimating probability of occupied homestead for each tenement and using 4.75 multiplier suggested by Appleby, as above.



1801	444
1821	518
1831	569
1841 <sup>g</sup>	501
1851	524
1861	542
1871	542
1881	453
1891	439
1901	403
1911	376
1921	363
1931	331
1951	486 <sup>f</sup>
1961	463 <sup>f</sup>
1971	425 <sup>f</sup>
1981	424 <sup>f</sup>
1991	523 <sup>f</sup>
2001	532 <sup>f</sup>
2011	570 <sup>f</sup>
2021	544 <sup>f</sup>

*Table Key:*

<sup>a</sup> 1332 Lay Subsidy

<sup>b</sup> Based on no. of tenements with dwellings: TNA LR2/212, survey of 1568.

<sup>c</sup> Protestation Return, figure based on the number of males over 18 and using Appleby's calculation, adjusted: Parliamentary Archive, HL/PO/JO/10/1/82/100.

<sup>d</sup> Denton's estimate: Denton, *Perambulation*, 325.

<sup>e</sup> Heysham's Census, Jackson Collection, Carlisle Central Library, M839.

<sup>f</sup> Figure includes Croglin.

According to the 1851 census, of the 112 heads of households recorded, 41 were born in Ainstable itself. A further 45 were born within 25 miles of it. There were four who came from Westmorland, four from Northumberland and four from Scotland. One came from Ireland, another from London and two from Lancashire.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> 1851 Census.

## **The Built Character**

Buildings in the medieval period would be mainly of wood and no free standing stone building survives within the township from before late 17th century although at Nunnery an arch and length of internal wall are dated to the 13th century. It is also possible that before 1600 and with a local abundance of suitable stone, cottages for centuries were simple with low stone walls packed with turf, few windows and thatched or turf roof, and easy to repair after raids.

The surviving farmhouses were built from the 17th century onwards in a northern vernacular style reflecting more settled times in the Border Counties and the changing and developing nature of agriculture and the increase in wealth of the customary tenants.<sup>70</sup>

Of the Listed Buildings in the township, only Nunnery is Grade I listed. Standing on the site of the medieval Benedictine nunnery, this nine bay, double pile house (two rooms deep) has an 18th century front of red sandstone ashlar. The building incorporates a 13th century length of wall and arch in the central passage with 16th and 17th century alterations all under a green slate roof. The rear facade has 16th century mullion windows and 18th and 19th century windows on different levels. To the northwest, the Grade II-listed early 19th century enclosed stable block of squared sandstone walls has a green slate roof with a large elliptical arch entrance in the east side with the Aglionby coat of arms above.<sup>71</sup> In 2002 new owners

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<sup>70</sup> Angus J. L. Winchester, *The Harvest of the Hills* (2000), Chap 1.

<sup>71</sup> NHLE, no. 1327031.

undertook extensive restorations to the house and in 2024 alterations to the stable block are continuing.

Bascodyke was originally the home of the Hodgson family and is probably late 16th century with alterations of 1747.<sup>72</sup> It is a double pile house of two storeys and four bays with a slate roof and rendered chimney stacks in the ridge at the gables ends, it faces south over a mature enclosed garden.<sup>73</sup>

Townhead, is early 19th century, Grade II house, facing west in a prominent position on the road to Broad Beck. It is a two bay, double pile, two storey house with chimney stacks in the ridge at each gable end and painted quoins. There is a lower, two storey, single bay joined on the right and a single pile two storey house of two bays with painted quoins with chimney stacks on the ridge at the gable ends abuts at a right angle on the south side. The rendering on the west front of the main house as described in the official listing was removed *c.* 2023 and the exposed random sandstone blocks repointed and the quoins repainted.<sup>74</sup>

Ainstable Hall on the north side of Hall Beck (the name changes from Powsy Sike at the bridge), may occupy the site of a ‘principal messuage wherein is builded a tower’, presumably a pele tower, but of which no trace remains.<sup>75</sup> The present Grade II-listed

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<sup>72</sup> James Hodgson, ‘The Hodgsons of Bascodyke’, *CW2*, XXV (1925) 244–267.

<sup>73</sup> NHLE, no. 1144843.

<sup>74</sup> NHLE, no. 1144836.

<sup>75</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/201/4/B, *Bounder and Survey of the Manor of Ainstable*, probability written between 1485 (death of Lord Humphrey Dacre, and 1488).

building, dated *c.* 1840, is double pile with two bays and porch, two storey with chimneys in the ridge at each gable end.<sup>76</sup>

The house in which in 2024 is called Armathwaite Manor standing next to the bank of the river Eden at the east end of Armathwaite bridge is listed as Armathwaite Hall but originally was called Armathwaite Villa. Standing behind a wall that obscures a view of the house, it is described as early 19th century with later additions.<sup>77</sup>

There are two Grade II buildings at Dale, one called simply ‘The Dale’ to distinguish it from the second which is called ‘Dale Farm House and Adjoining Barn.’<sup>78</sup> Dale Farm House was formerly a farmhouse and public house of two storeys and three bays, probably late 17th century with mid 18th century alterations built of coarse sandstone rubble with large flush quoins, green slate roof with two chimney stacks. The pub is said to have belonged to Sir Richard Hodgson’s brewery of Carlisle but is not in the Directories. The Dale is probably late 17th century with alterations and additions of 1752 on a lintel to the rear built of hammer dressed sandstone under a green slate roof, two storeys and two bays.

## **LANDOWNERSHIP**

There were two manors in the township of Ainstable: the manor of Ainstable (originally Ainstapleth and similar spellings) and the manor of Ermathwaite which

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<sup>76</sup> NHLE, no. 1144843.

<sup>77</sup> NHLE, no. 1144837.

<sup>78</sup> NHLE nos. 1144840, 1327029.

comprised the estate of the Nunnery (suppressed 1537). There were significant gifts of land in Ainstable to religious houses; a new estate, later known as the ‘Armathwaite Villa Estate’, was created by enclosure of wasteland in 1697; and the large ‘Sharrow Bay estate’, was created in the late 19th century from widespread purchases by Anthony Parkin of Sharrow Bay.

### **The Manor of Ainstable**

John Denton, writing soon after 1600, said that Ainstable (‘Ainstaplight’) was a ‘seignory given by King Henry I to Adam son of Swene.’<sup>79</sup> The *Pipe Rolls* record that Henry I granted four villis to Adam son of Swein—Blencarn, Culgaith and two others unnamed—one of which seems to have been Ainstable.<sup>80</sup> Adam died in about 1159, leaving two daughters: Anabil whose second marriage was to William de Neville, and Matilda who married Adam de Montbegon. In 1212 the manor of Ainstable was divided into three moieties held by Roger de Montbegon, son of Adam de Montbegon, Simon son of Walter and Alexander de Nevill for 112*s. 8d.* cornage, the sum paid originally to Henry I by Adam, son of Swein.<sup>81</sup>

Between 1212 and 1276, the surviving records are unclear about the ownership of the manor. John Denton wrote ‘In K Hen 3 tyme Ainstable lordship became the inheritance of John Murry and Henry Terriby, Michael de Vallibus filius David, and others’. None of this can be confirmed from other sources, but Denton continued ‘About the yeare of our lord God 1239

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<sup>79</sup> *Denton’s History*, 86–7; see also T.H.B. Graham, ‘The manor of Ainstable’, *CW2*, xix (1919), 47–52.

<sup>80</sup> *VCH Cumb.*, I, 422.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

and in the latter end of that king's tyme William Boyvill of Thursbye, knight, was lord thereof and held the same of Richard Neville'.<sup>82</sup> William de Boyvill is recorded as exchanging land in Ainstable in 1276/7,<sup>83</sup> and at his death in 1305 he held the manor of Ainstable from Richard de Neville.<sup>84</sup> William's heir was John de Boyvill who died in 1319, his heir being his brother Edmund de Boyvill.<sup>85</sup> Edmund de Boyvill sold the manor to Andrew de Harcla, created earl of Carlisle in 1322, and executed for treason in 1323. King Edward II granted the forfeited manor to Richard de Denton, by which time one quarter of the manor was held by Margaret de Askeby, widow of Robert de Askeby who had purchased it from Harcla, holding it from John de Neville of Hornby, Lancashire.<sup>86</sup> Also, in 1324, Sir John de Denton and Sir Richard de Denton made an agreement with Joan, widow of William de Boyvill who claimed to hold the manor as her dowry for life.<sup>87</sup>

The Denton family held the manor until 1446, when Sir John Denton enfeoffed it to William de Moore, vicar of Ainstable, who in turn enfeoffed Thomas Dacre, Lord of Gilsland and Phillippa his wife, and William Marshall, vicar of Kirkoswald.<sup>88</sup> This conveyance was challenged by later Dentons, but William de Moore swore an affidavit dated 9 January 1448, that it had been Denton's intention that the manor be passed to Dacre: and it is certain that the manor of Ainstable was from 1446 a member of the very large estates of the Dacres. The

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<sup>82</sup> Denton's *History* op. cit.; the instrument by which Boyvill acquired the manor has not been found.

<sup>83</sup> F.M.H Parker, 'A calendar of Feet of Fines for Cumberland', CW2, vii (1907).

<sup>84</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, IV, 183.

<sup>85</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, VI, 131.

<sup>86</sup> *Cal. Pat. R.* 1334–38, 111, reciting events of 1323.

<sup>87</sup> Parker op. cit., no. 247.

<sup>88</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/1.

Thomas Dacre of 1446 was succeeded by his younger son Ralph Dacre (an elder son Thomas had died young) and Ralph Dacre was the owner of the manor of Ainstable at the onset of the Wars of the Roses. In 1461 Ralph Dacre and his brother Humphrey Dacre fought on the Lancastrian side at Towton. Ralph Dacre was killed and Humphrey Dacre attainted. King Edward IV, ascending the throne for the first time, acquired the Dacre estates by attainder and assigned them to Joan (Dacre) Fenys, daughter of the deceased elder brother of Ralph and Humphrey Dacre. The Fenys family of Kent held this large (mainly Northern English) inheritance, including Ainstable, for the next 12 years. In 1473 Edward IV, restored to the throne after the second battle of Barnet, reversed Humphrey Dacre's attainder, restored the entire Dacre estates to him, and ennobled him as Baron Dacre of the North (the Fenys family became Lords Dacre of the South).<sup>89</sup>

At his death in 1485, Lord Humphrey Dacre held the manor of Ainstable—which included *inter alia* a capital messuage and 40 acres of demesne, a close called ‘le Parke’, eight cottages, a water corn mill; a fishery in the water of Eden, and a court ‘worth nothing above the expenses of the steward’—from Thomas Harryngton, knight, service unknown.<sup>90</sup> It seems likely that Harryngton had at some stage acquired the overlordship from the Nevilles of Hornby: but there is no later mention of an overlordship, and it seems that thereafter the Barons Dacre of the North held Ainstable from the Crown.

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<sup>89</sup> TNA, SC/29/144.

<sup>90</sup> *Cal. Inq. p.m.*, Henry VII vol. 1, no. 157.

The manor of Ainstable now descended regularly with the Barons Dacre of the North, to Lord Thomas (2nd baron, d. 1525), Lord William (3rd baron, d. 1563), Lord Thomas (4th baron, d. 1566), and the child Lord George (5th and last baron, d. 1569, aged 7). In May 1569, a court sitting at Greenwich determined that the barony was extinct and that the heirs to the vast Dacre inheritance were the child George's three sisters Ann, Mary and Elizabeth Dacre.<sup>91</sup> However at about the same time a small group of manors, including Ainstable, were awarded to the unsuccessful baronial claimant Leonard Dacre, younger son of Lord William Dacre and uncle of the child Lord George Dacre.<sup>92</sup> Leonard Dacre did not accept the Greenwich court's verdict and mustered his considerable forces to assert his claimed right to the wider inheritance. He was defeated in a battle with royal forces near Castle Carrock on 20th February 1570, fled the country and was attainted. His manors, including Ainstable, were forfeit to the crown and remained in crown hands to 1649.<sup>93</sup> In 1583 the manor of Ainstable was leased by the crown to Fergus Graham for 21 years, and in 1602 to Robert Graham also for 21 years.<sup>94</sup>

Following the execution of the King in 1649, there were claims in the Court of Exchequer to the manors forfeited from Leonard Dacre under the general principle that lands forfeited to the crown for treason should be returned to the 'right heirs' after the death of the last surviving descendant of the treasonous family (in this case one Ranulph Dacre who died in

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<sup>91</sup> CAS (C), D/MH/10/6/16.

<sup>92</sup> The instrument by which Leonard Dacre acquired these manors has not been found

<sup>93</sup> TNA, E 178/576.

<sup>94</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/2, the 1602 lease reciting earlier events



1634).<sup>95</sup> The Howards of Arundel and Naworth claimed Ainstable by reference to the court decision in 1569, being descendants of Lady Anne (Dacre) Howard, countess of Arundel, and Lady Elizabeth (Dacre) Howard of Naworth, sisters of Lord George Dacre, and their claim was allowed by the Court of Exchequer in 1649.<sup>96</sup> In 1654 the Howards of Arundel transferred their half share of the manor of Ainstable to the Howards of Naworth (earls of Carlisle from 1661), and Ainstable became an ‘out-manor’ of the Barony of Gilsland.<sup>97</sup> Thereafter, the manor descended regularly with the Barony of Gilsland until 1834 when it was placed in trust with the 6th Duke of Devonshire and James Loch as trustees for the 5th Earl of Carlisle. In 1868 after the death of Loch, the trust was renewed with the then Duke of Devonshire and Edward Wentworth Keppel Coke as Lords of the Manor of Ainstable.

Edward Ecroyd, a wealthy mill owner from Nelson in Lancashire, who had bought the Low House estate, Armathwaite in 1877, bought the manor of Ainstable on 14 May 1890 from the estate of the Earl of Carlisle. Edward Ecroyd held Courts Baron and customary of the manor of Ainstable from May 1895; and when he died eleven years later (27 September 1916), a general court of demission was held. Thereafter, the manor descended regularly to Thomas Backhouse Ecroyd (d. 1945), William Edward Bedingfield Ecroyd (d. 1957), Edward Peter Ecroyd (d. 2002), and Charles Ecroyd, great-great-grandson of Edward Ecroyd, lord of the manor in 2023.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. R.A.A. Brockington, ‘Francis Lennard’s Claim to Kirkoswald’, *CW3*, x (2010), 163f, an article which explains the legal argument in similar cases in the Court of Exchequer

<sup>96</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/8.

<sup>97</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/9 (1654).

<sup>98</sup> Ecroyd family papers at Low House, Armathwaite; inf. Charles Ecroyd.

### **The Manor of Ermathwaite (Armathwaite Priory and the Nunnery estate)**

There are no records for the manor but courts were held in the 18th century. In May 1773, at the Court Baron and General Dimissions of Christopher Aglionby, lord of the said manor (Ermathwaite), John Hodgson was admitted to a tenement in Dale at an annual rent of 8s., a Fine of £8 on change of Lord and services of one load of coals, three days shearing and two hens and one cock yearly.<sup>99</sup> The manor was included in the description of the Nunnery Estate when it was auctioned for sale by Francis Keyes Aglionby in 1892, and when Sir Richard Denman purchased it in 1920.<sup>100</sup> The name, with different spelling but beginning with an ‘E’, was also used in a 13th century grant to Wetheral Priory.<sup>101</sup> It therefore appears that the name Ermathwaite was both early and a deliberate distinction from Armathwaite, and that it may derive from the earlier existence of a hermitage. For present purposes the lands included in this manor are referred to as ‘The Nunnery Estate’.

At the dissolution of the Priory, the Nunnery Estate consisted of about 90 a. of demesne adjoining the Priory, 30 a. in Dale, 18 a. in Ruckcroft, and the area west of the River Eden known as Nunneclose.<sup>102</sup> On 20 July 1538 the king leased to Leonard Barrowe of Armathwaite for 21 years ‘the site of the former priory of Armathwaite suppressed by order of Parliament’ together with all the lands described above, and together with the rectory of the parish church of Ainstapleth.<sup>103</sup> In 1549 the possessions of the Nunnery were granted by

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<sup>99</sup> Copy of original certificate printed in *Ainstable Millennium Book* (2011).

<sup>100</sup> Denman estate deeds (Dorothy Milner); 1982 auction particulars CAS (C), DB/74, box 179.

<sup>101</sup> *The Register of the Priory of Wetheral*, ed. J. E. Prescott (CWAAS, Rec. Ser., I, 1897), no. 162.

<sup>102</sup> CAS (C), DMH/10/7/5, p. 807; a 1537 survey of the Priory estates.

<sup>103</sup> CAS (C), D/AY/6/8.

letters patent to Sir John Peryent and Thomas Reve (as part of a wider transaction concerning former monastic lands), but ownership of the Nunnery estates was determined by a further grant by letters patent in 1553 to William Grayme, otherwise Carlisle.<sup>104</sup>

The Nunnery estate would remain in Graham hands until 1685, descending to Fergus Graham (d. 1589), William Graham (son of Fergus, d. 1602) and his son William (d. 1615). It then passed to George Graham (d. 1669), brother of the last-named William, and to George's grandson Richard Graham who sold it in 1685 to Sir John Lowther.<sup>105</sup> Lowther sold it to John Aglionby in exchange for Drumburgh in 1694.<sup>106</sup> It would remain in Aglionby hands until 1920.

In 1712 the Nunnery estate was gifted to Henry Aglionby, grandson of John, as part of his marriage settlement. On Henry Aglionby's death in 1759, it descended to his son Henry (d. 1770) and from him to his son Christopher Aglionby (d. 1785, without issue) after whose death the estate was held by trustees for Christopher's four sisters: Elizabeth Bamber, Julia Aglionby, Ann Aglionby, and Mary Yates. By 1816 Elizabeth Bamber was the sole owner and remained so until her death in 1822.<sup>107</sup> There was litigation between Elizabeth Bamber and the earl of Carlisle in 1821 concerning the entitlement of Nunnery tenants to common land in the manor of Ainstable, and thereby to a share of the land statutorily enclosed in 1821:

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<sup>104</sup> CAS (C), D/AY/1/221; Graham documents do not use the term 'Manor of Ermathwaite'.

<sup>105</sup> CAS (C), DX/556/12.

<sup>106</sup> CAS (C), D/AY/6/8.

<sup>107</sup> CAS (C), DX/556/7 and D/AY/6/8.

the court found in favour of Mrs Bamber and 14 customary tenants of the Nunnery estate were allocated plots in the final award.<sup>108</sup>

By the terms of Elizabeth Bamber's will the Nunnery estate passed first to a nephew Francis Yates of Skirwith (d. 1840) who changed his name to Aglionby and his residence to the Nunnery. He was a prominent public figure (chair of Cumberland Quarter Sessions and Member of Parliament for Cumberland East Division) and second to another nephew Henry Aglionby Bateman who also changed his name, becoming Henry Aglionby Aglionby (d. 1854, MP for Cockermouth, a London based lawyer. After Henry's death the Nunnery estate passed to American cousins. It was purchased at auction in 1892 by Arthur Charles Aglionby of Stafffield Hall, a great-grandson of Francis (Yates) Aglionby, and sold by him together with the Stafffield Hall estate to the Hon Richard Douglas Denman in March 1920. Denman sold off much of the Nunnery estate but retained the house, farmsteading, gardens and walks and the lordship of the manor of Ermathwaite until his death in 1974. His descendants sold the remainder of the Nunnery estate with its fine mansion house to David and Shirley Hodgkiss in 2001. After David Hodgkiss' death in 2020, the estate was sold to Tim Leacock, the owner in 2023.<sup>109</sup>

## **Other Estates**

*Land gifted by endowment to religious houses*<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> See also *VCH Cumb.: Kirkoswald and Renwick* (2019), p. 25, concerning the Stafffield Hall estate.

<sup>109</sup> Inf. Shirley Hodgkiss.

<sup>110</sup> *Reg. Wetheral and Lanercost Cartulary*.

The Register of Wetheral Priory includes 13 charters in the 13th century land in Ainstable to the Priory, totalling about 36 acres. After the Dissolution this land was granted to the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle Cathedral. The Lanercost Cartulary also records a grant of five acres in Ainstable: this land would have passed after the Dissolution to Sir Thomas Dacre of Lanercost.<sup>111</sup>

### *Armathwaite Villa*

The Armathwaite Villa estate, which includes the largest house in Armathwaite Bridge End, and land on the east side of the River Eden upstream from the bridge, came into being in 1697 when Lancelot Simpson, a Penrith lawyer serving the Earl of Carlisle as steward of the Manor of Ainstable, was allotted 30 customary a. (about 54 statute a.), adjoining the River Eden upstream from Armathwaite Bridge (then under construction), out of the 285 a. of waste or common land enclosed in that year.<sup>112</sup> Simpson died in 1711, and in his will he referred to ‘my messuage and tenement at Armathwaite Bridge in the parish of Ainstable’, which he left it to his Whelpdale grandchildren.<sup>113</sup> The house built by Simpson was quite large (in 1808 window tax was assessed on 12 windows).<sup>114</sup> In 1717 the owner was Thomas Whelpdale, grandson of Lancelot Simpson.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> *Lanercost Cartulary*, 73–4.

<sup>112</sup> CAS (C), DMH/10/7/5; an account of the origins of the Armathwaite Villa estate is included in a newspaper report concerning a fishing dispute in 1883: *Carlisle Journal*, 18 Jul. 1883.

<sup>113</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1711/ WINVX/Lancelot Simpson.

<sup>114</sup> CAS (C), D/HUD/17/88; the authors thank Bob Nicholls for drawing attention to the source.

<sup>115</sup> CAS (C), D/HUD/17/28.

In 1770 John Richardson esq, thought also to be a Whelpdale descendant, paid land tax on the property;<sup>116</sup> and a bound volume of accounts in respect of ‘Armathwaite House’, kept by John Richardson until his death in 1780, was continued thereafter by his successors until 1813.<sup>117</sup> From 1817 the estate was in the hands of John de Whelpdale (thought to have been John Richardson's son, reverting the family name back to de Whelpdale), and described as ‘an ancient estate of 65 a. including a house and cottage.’<sup>118</sup> John de Whelpdale rebuilt and enlarged the house, creating the present handsome structure: he was listed as owner/occupier of 65 a. in an 1819 valuation of the parish of Ainstable,<sup>119</sup> and he added 59 a. to the estate by purchase of allotments enclosed in 1823. His estate was recorded as 125 a. in the 1841 Tithe Commutation Schedule.<sup>120</sup>

John de Whelpdale died in 1844, and his widow Mary de Whelpdale (whose will records her as ‘of Armathwaite Villa’) in 1848. Thereafter the estate changed hands several times. From 1861 to 1883 it was owned by Anthony Clarke and his widow Mary Clarke, a couple described as ‘landed proprietors.’ In 1901 the house was occupied by George H. Dixon, JP DL, a land agent born in Carlisle. The estate was purchased by Thomas Backhouse Ecroyd in 1911: at a later date it was sold by the Ecroyds and in the 1990s it was owned by David Stapleton. In 2022 it was purchased by a Carlisle firm called Partnering in Property

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<sup>116</sup> CAS (C), QRP/1/6.

<sup>117</sup> CAS (C), D/HUD/17/88.

<sup>118</sup> CAS (C), D/HUD/17/62/2.

<sup>119</sup> CAS (C), PR/96/36.

<sup>120</sup> CAS (C), DRC/8/3.

Management Ltd who have converted it into luxury holiday homes renamed as Armathwaite Manor.<sup>121</sup>

None of the owners and occupiers of this estate are recorded as participating in the local government of Ainstable, and the impression is that Armathwaite Villa was in its earlier existence used as a second home and rural retreat for wealthy and influential people who for the most part lived elsewhere. Mary de Whelpdale (who left money for the poor of Ainstable) died there and subsequent owners throughout the 19th and 20th centuries have resided there.

#### *The Sharrow Bay Estate (Parkin)*<sup>122</sup>

In 1873 Antony Parkin, who derived his wealth from coal mining in West Cumberland, settled at Sharrow Bay on Ullswater, bought Croglin Hall estate in Staffield which included land in Ainstable. In 1881 he acquired the Broomrigg estate, and in a series of later transactions also acquired *inter alia* Slack Farm, Cross House Farm (part of the Nunnery estate), Dale Mill, Outhwaite Slack farm, Bramery farm and Bascodyke Head farm. By 1936, his heirs owned 1174 acres in the parish of Ainstable. All this land was sold in the 1960s, mostly to sitting tenants.<sup>123</sup>

## **ECONOMIC HISTORY**

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<sup>121</sup> Land Registry title 313159, accessed 23 Feb 2023.

<sup>122</sup> See also *Kirkoswald and Renwick*, pp. 24–5.

<sup>123</sup> CAS (C) DB74/2/5, catalogue of land to be sold and map of Sharrow Bay estate.

Farming, both arable and pastoral, has always predominated in Ainstable - a township which lacks, and has always lacked, major industrial and mining enterprises. Supplemental economic activity has included fishing, woodland, quarrying, mills, the usual local trades, and a few shops and public houses.

## **Farming**

### *The Physical Framework*<sup>124</sup>

The 4,433 a. of the township of Ainstable from earliest recorded times included large areas of woodland and waste, and most surveys and rentals between 1568 and 1821 (statutory enclosure) record significant amounts of assarting and intaking, doubtless a widespread and permitted practice over several centuries.

A survey of the Nunnery estate in 1537 recorded 121 a. of land in agricultural use (including land at Ruckcroft and Dale).<sup>125</sup> The 1568 survey of the manor of Ainstable recorded 390 a. of land, meadow and pasture, held by freeholders and tenants at will; 60 a. of demesne farmed under lease; 24 a. recently 'improved' or intaken from the waste; and a further eight tenements, the occupation and size of which was unknown to the surveyor, but for this calculation will be estimated at 72 acres.<sup>126</sup> The total of the recorded and estimated areas of

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<sup>124</sup> The following discussion makes much use of CAS (C), DHN/C/201/4 (thought to be a later transcript and translation of a document written after the death of Lord Humphrey Dacre in 1485), and TNA, LR2/212, a survey taken of several Cumberland manors on the orders of Thomas Howard, 4th Duke of Norfolk, at the time guardian of the owner of those manors Lord George Dacre, aged 7: these will be referred to as '1488 extent' and '1568 survey'.

<sup>125</sup> CAS (C), DMH 10/7/5, p. 807; the Nunnery and its lands were held from the Crown, and leased by the crown after dissolution in 1537.

<sup>126</sup> 1568 survey.



farmland in these Tudor documents is 667 a. and the approximate total of arable and pasture land in 1568 was 1,200 a., about one quarter of the land in the township.<sup>127</sup>

It seems probable that intaking from the commons in small amounts, as recorded in 1568, continued throughout the century that followed. In 1697 284 a. (about 511 statute a.) of waste were intaken under a single agreement between the Earl of Carlisle and his tenantry.<sup>128</sup> More than 70 tenants received modest allotments under this agreement, but two (neither resident in Ainstable) received large allotments: Lancelot Simpson of Penrith, the Earl's steward of the manor of Ainstable, received 30 a. (perhaps 54 statute a.) of land adjoining the river Eden upstream from Armathwaite Bridge—then under construction—to become in due course the site of Armathwaite Villa;<sup>129</sup> and Peter Hodgson of Barrockfield (in neighbouring Hesketh) received 50 a. (perhaps 90 statute a.), probably an extension of the large Hodgson estates at Bascodyke by adding waste lands to both east and west, in respect of which there was no 'rent of wastes', but an increase in the free rent paid by Hodgson for his Ainstable lands.<sup>130</sup> The intakes of 1697 were large, but perhaps no more than one third of the total intakes between 1568 and 1821. A rental in 1707 added several new rents for improvements made since 1697, notably Caleb Dixon who paid 15s. 6d. for 22.5 a. at Harras.<sup>131</sup> In 1737 several of the tenants (the details do not survive) agreed to pay two shillings per a. 'for all the lands we have taken up more than our share of Ainstable Common'. The document recording this was

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<sup>127</sup> This multiplier was used in *VCH Cumb.: Kirkoswald and Renwick*, 27, n.1.

<sup>128</sup> CAS (C), DMH 10/7/5, p. 703.

<sup>129</sup> Landownership: Other Estates, above. Simpson's will (1711) itemises 'my messuage and tenement at Armathwaite Bridge'.

<sup>130</sup> CAS (C), DHN 1/50, rentals of 1699; for the Hodgson estates at Bascodyke, see, for example, Denton, *Perambulation*, 325.

<sup>131</sup> CAS (C), DHN/1/53.

described as a ‘submission’—so it would seem that unauthorised improvements from the waste had been successfully challenged by the Earl of Carlisle's officers. This was perhaps one of several similar events in the 18th century, most of which have not been recorded.<sup>132</sup>

In 1821 the Ainstable Inclosure Award allotted 1,649 a., including the wooded areas at Combes and Broomrigg, after which there were no remaining commons and wastes in the township of Ainstable.

### *Farmhouses before 1650*

Farm names recorded in pre-1600 documents include ‘Bramura’ (later Bramery), Bankhouse (later Northgill Bank), Clawgarth in Southfield (not later recorded), and Bascodyke and Castledyke. Several more farmhouses were recorded in wills and manorial records between 1600 and 1650, including Towngate (1611), Row (1623), Row Foot (1633), Ayckbank (1633, later Aimbank), Beck (1634), Low Hall (1635, the demesne farmhouse), Townhead (1637), and Faugh Head (1637).<sup>133</sup>

## **Agrarian Institutions**

### *Common Fields in the manor of Ainstable*

Grants of land to Wetheral Priory in the 13th century make references to the ‘townfields of Ainstable’, and use terminology suggestive of ‘dales’ in common fields. It seems safe to infer that there were extensive common fields in Ainstable from that century or earlier.

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<sup>132</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/5bb.

<sup>133</sup> 1488 extent; 1568 survey; probate records at CAS (C), and manor court rolls CAS (C), DHN/C/1/5.

The 1568 survey refers 15 times to 'the South Field', eight times to 'the Kirkfield', four times to 'Rowcroftfield', and also (each once or twice only, and not recurring later) to fields called 'Low Field', 'Holmestry', 'Southeranfield', and 'Lawsenthfield'. The largest common field was the South Field, centrally located between the hamlets of Ainstable and Ruckcroft: 13 tenants, including farmers in Ainstable, Ruckcroft, Bascodyke and Dale were recorded with land in South Field; and nine tenants, all resident in Ainstable, were recorded with land in Kirkfield which lay north-west of the parish church; the Inclosure Map of 1821 shows ten strips remaining in the field.

Manor court rolls of the first half of the 17th century contain no records of pains governing the seasonal movement of cattle, nor of amerancements for non-compliance: the tenants therefore shared a general obligation to prevent animal intrusion into the common fields. Tenants were fined by the manor court both for allowing their beasts uncontrolled access to common fields and for non-repair of dykes.<sup>134</sup>

Traces of the previous existence of common fields can be found in field names; and there are three surviving documents from the 1760s recording the exchange of dales, one in the 'fields of Ainstable' and two in Ruckcroft.<sup>135</sup> The inclosure commissioners in 1821 referred to a small parcel of land as 'on the south-west side of a common field at Longlands'.<sup>136</sup> In 1838

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<sup>134</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/5; John Hodgson fined 3s. 4d. in 1637 for 'having loose beasts on the Kirkfield'.

<sup>135</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/26; DX/11/29; DX/11/31

<sup>136</sup> CAS (C), QRE/1/28, the Ainstable Enclosure Award, para. 9 (towards the end of the document).

the vicar and four other tenants appointed John Dixon and John Harrison to divide ‘nine and a half acres of land in the Town Field in which we all have an interest’. Their award, dated 26 Mar 1838, perhaps records the final extinction of common fields in Ainstable.<sup>137</sup> There are no other records of exchange of dales and enclosure of common fields, and it seems likely that most of the common fields had been extinguished by unrecorded agreements before 1720.

*Translation of customary to freehold tenure*

The 1488 extent records the names of five freeholders in Ainstable—Richard Salkeld, John Thomson, William Ullisby, Thomas Beauchamp, and John Pearson—and the 1568 survey lists eight freeholders, 45 tenants at will, and two cottagers.<sup>138</sup> In 1568 both freeholders and customary tenants paid rents, greenhew and cornage, and all except the freeholders owed boone service to the lord of the manor. Free rents ranged between 1*d.* and 4*d.*; customary rents for whole tenements between 3*s.* and 10*s.*, and smaller rents were applied to cottages and improvements. Greenhew was charged at 2*d.* per head to most tenants,<sup>139</sup> and cornage (not paid by all tenants) varied between 2*d.* and 17*d.* Boone obligations varied between one and four days’ work (a total of 86 days’ work, without food and drink), and could be discharged by payment of 4*d.* per day not worked. The 1568 survey also recorded a right of pasture on Harrows, ‘by estimation 16 a., upon land on which the lord had been accustomed to keep a flock of sheep, for which all the inhabitants paid yearly [a total of] 5*s.*’

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<sup>137</sup> CAS (C), PR/96/36.

<sup>138</sup> 1488 extent and 1568 survey.

<sup>139</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/5, 1638, ‘all tenants in the manor to pay 2*d.* greenhew, except for those at Dale, who pay 1*d.* and are 'not examined in court for the king's wood as the rest of the tenants are’.

In 1610, after James I and VI had combined England and Scotland under his crown and renounced any further need for border service, Ainstable was one of his Cumberland manors in which the King sought to abolish customary tenure and tenantright by translating all customary tenancies to leasehold. Anthony Thompson (d. 1615) held ‘a lease holden of his majesty of a tenement called Castledyke for the term of 37 years’,<sup>140</sup> but in 1633 (from which year there are surviving manor court rolls for Ainstable) customary tenure remained in place, and was the commonest type of tenure until 1697.

The Parliamentary survey of 1650 listed annual revenue of 5s. from the Moorfarm (Harrows), 10d from free rents, and £10 14s. from customary rents. The annual rent of the ‘capital mansion and manor house’ (Low Hall and the demesne), under a 60-year lease with 20 years to run, was £1.<sup>141</sup> The surveyors estimated the annual revenue from entry fines on change of customary tenant at £7—entry fines being four times the ancient rent, payable on death of or alienation by the tenant, and on death of the lord of the manor. A general fine totaling £42 16s. was due following the execution of King Charles the previous year.<sup>142</sup>

In 1649 the manor of Ainstable was awarded by the Court of Exchequer to the Howards of Arundel and Naworth<sup>143</sup> and in 1697 the Earl of Carlisle extinguished most customary tenure, entry fines and boone service, by enfranchising customary tenants in exchange for free rents

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<sup>140</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/165/2; PROB/1615/INVX98.

<sup>141</sup> TNA, LR14/1024.

<sup>142</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/7.

<sup>143</sup> Above, Landownership.

fixed at twice the previous customary rent.<sup>144</sup> When Edward Ecroyd purchased the manor in 1890, there were more than 70 free rents, but only seven customary rents, yielding a total of 2s. per year.<sup>145</sup> So far as the manorial lands of Ainstable were concerned there had been a significant switch to freeholds, and a large increase in freeholders—but these changes did not affect the Nunnery estates, and statutory enclosure in 1821 would make further changes in the balance of tenure in the township of Ainstable.

### *Estate management*

In 1819 the steward drew up a 6-page ‘list of claimants on Ainstable Common paying greenhew rent and claiming a right to cut underwood in the Cooms’: 48 claimants were paying greenhew rents between 2d. and 1s., and 27 were not claiming the right to greenhew.<sup>146</sup> After 1890 the few remaining customary tenants continued to pay greenhew for a few years, the last recorded payment being in 1911.<sup>147</sup>

The gaming laws enacted in the mid-19th century led to the employment of game keepers by prominent landowners, in particular the Parkins from 1891 to 1938 for their extensive land at Broomrigg.

### *Increase in size of farms and the rise of owner-occupation in the 20th century*

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<sup>144</sup> CAS (C), DMH 10/7/5/694ff; in 1707 freeholders were still paying greenhew at 6d. p.a: DHN/C/1/53.

<sup>145</sup> Ecroyd family papers at Low House, Armathwaite (court book).

<sup>146</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/31.

<sup>147</sup> Ecroyd family papers at Low House, Armathwaite (court book).

In 1910 there were three farms of more than 200 a. (Ainstable Hall, Cross House and Bramery); seven of between 100 and 200 a. (Towngate, Bascodyke, Low Bascodyke, Vicarage, Ruckcroft, Nunnery and Slack); and 10 between 50 and 100 a. (Townhead, Beckbrow, Carr Holme, Bascodyke, North Gillbank, Far Harras, Harras, Ruckcroft (2), Highfield). Of these 20 farmholds, 18 included farmhouses and all but one were tenanted. Most of this land was held by lease or tenancy, the freehold being in the hands of the Ecroyds and Parkins (who had purchased the Nunnery lands), other absentee landlords, and the vicar (who had large glebelands allotted by the enclosure award). A further 612 a. of agricultural land was divided amongst 28 smallholders, four owner-occupied and 24 tenanted.

The National Farm Survey in 1941 recorded 35 farms in Ainstable ranging from 5 a. to 290 acres. 11 farmholds, the largest of 36 a., were recorded as ‘smallholding’; and there were also two dairy farms of less than 40 acres. Four farms, including the three listed for 1910 plus Walmoorsyke, were between 200 and 300 a.; eight were between 100 and 200 a.; and 10 were between 40 and 100 a.: overall, no great change in sizes of farm, nor in tenure, between 1910 and 1941. The smallholdings apart, almost all farms were ‘mixed dairy or ‘dairy and arable’.<sup>148</sup>

In 2023 most Ainstable farmers are owner-occupiers of the greater part of their land, several also with added acreage rented from absentee landowners. There are three dairy farms.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> TNA, TIR/4/4 (1910) and MAF 32/167/138 (1941).

<sup>149</sup> *Inf.* Jackie Moffatt, sometime small farmer and clerk of the parish council.

### *Livestock*

Probate inventories between 1560 and 1600, both of men and women, usually included both crops and livestock, and most included small numbers of both cattle and sheep. Oxen featured in about half the inventories, usually one or two, but Robert Barrow (d. 1590), lessee of Low Hall and the demesne, had nine oxen. After 1660 mention of oxen became infrequent, the last being in 1735. 80 per cent of inventories before 1600 mentioned cows, usually either one or two together with the occasional calf and/or 'quie' or 'stirk'. Most inventories included sheep, but usually less than 20, and many fewer than ten: notable exceptions were James Rickerby of Ruckcroft (d. 1578) with one ox, seven cattle and 113 sheep, Roger Thompson of Bascodyke (d. 1587) with two oxen, 12 cattle and 88 sheep, and George Thompson of Castledyke (d. 1593) with two oxen, 15 cattle and 90 sheep.

The general impression given by inventories before 1600 is that most Ainstable farmers maintained flocks, herds and crop yields at a level required to support domestic needs, perhaps with some income from spinning their own wool. Survival of inventories in the 17th and 18th centuries is patchy, and they do not describe widespread large-scale animal husbandry, exceptions being Leonard Whitesmith of Ruckcroft (d. 1711) with two oxen, nine cattle and 110 sheep; John Leach of Low Hall (d. 1729) with ten cattle and 120 sheep; Henry Beaumont of Bascodyke (d. 1734), also with ten cattle and 120 sheep; and William Wilson of Ruckcroft (d. 1738) with 16 cattle and 190 sheep. Between 1744 and 1752, four inventories included 'black cattle'.



The descriptions of land use given by the Ordnance Survey in 1863 apply ‘arable’ for some 80 per cent of Ainstable land and ‘pasture’ or ‘wood’ about 10 per cent each.<sup>150</sup> There were from the 1570s onwards a few specialists in animal husbandry with larger flocks and herds, but they were, in Ainstable, the exception.

### *Crops*

Until 1580 the crops named in inventories were oats, big (barley), and rye, sometimes all three. ‘Corn’, first mentioned in 1580, became general after 1600, specific grains being mentioned less frequently, and sometimes together with ‘corn’.<sup>151</sup> Writing in 1797 Sir Frederick Morton Eden said of Ainstable ‘on the strong lands good wheat is produced, and on the light and sandy parts of the parish barley, rye, pease, clover, turnips, oats and potatoes are cultivated.’ Since the word ‘wheat’ is never mentioned in surviving probate inventories, it seems possible that the term ‘corn’ was being used by Ainstable appraisers from about 1600 to include wheat.

Explaining his valuations of the corn tythe in about 1840, William Morley wrote ‘The ancient land in this parish is in general of good quality, and is capable of producing tolerable crops of corn, particularly near to the villages of Ainstable, Dale and Ruckcroft, and part of the Nunnery estate, but the principal part of the lately enclosed common is very poor land ...’.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> TNA, search room shelves, Ordnance Survey Book of Reference, Parish of Ainstable, 1863.

<sup>151</sup> For example, the inventory of Fergus Verty of Dale (d. 1611) included ‘sown corn, big, rye’.

<sup>152</sup> CAS (C), DBS/4/3/22 (undated document).

### ***Woodland and Forestry***

In 1488 it was said of Combes, then estimated at 20 a., that the herbage was worth 12*d.* p.a., but the wood ‘nothing because it was no felling wood’. In 1568 the Combes was described as ‘a parcel of ground on the north bank of the Eden containing by estimation 100 a. of which ten acres are planted with old trees and quarrels, and the rest pasture.’<sup>153</sup> The Parliamentary survey of 1650 estimated the value of firewood on the demesne at £20; and the value of wood upon the Combes at £120 p.a.—but the existing lease of Combes, part of a wider document, was for less than £2 p.a.<sup>154</sup>

A memorandum to a rental (undated but closely related to the 1650 survey) records that ‘the tenants have liberty to take wood for house boot, plough boot, wain boot, hedge boot & fire boot, so as the [the value of] the wood is not consid[er]able.’<sup>155</sup> By comparison with other manors these allowances sound generous and there were few manorial amercements relating to the theft of wood. From the 1680s the Earl of Carlisle included clauses in leases of the mill and the demesne reserving timber rights. In 1731 Robert Leach, lessee of the demesne, was appointed wood ward of the Combes for 10*s.* p.a.; and in 1737 the Combes (with Dobby Close) were leased to Thomas Dixon for seven years at £10 p.a.<sup>156</sup>

The cottage at Combehead, which may later have been a tied cottage for a woodman and his family, was first recorded in 1841.<sup>157</sup> In 1861 woodmen were recorded at Combehead,

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<sup>153</sup> 1488 extent and 1568 survey.

<sup>154</sup> TNA, LR14/1024.

<sup>155</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/5.

<sup>156</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/6/1/25 (1731) and C/1/22 (1737).

<sup>157</sup> 1841 census, household 39.

Blinkbonny and Harrows; and in 1884 Thomas Harrison of Combehead and Matthew Robinson of Coalbank both advertised their services as woodmen in the Trade Directory of that year.<sup>158</sup>

In 1835 there was a sale of oak wood at Combes, and in 1847 of oak and other timber at Broomrigg. In 1881 Broomrigg Farm was advertised for sale by auction to include 162 a. of valuable growing timber.<sup>159</sup>

### ***Fishing***

Ainstable's western boundary, over four miles in length, lies on the River Eden, and its eastern boundary, some two miles, lies on Croglin Water: the fishing rights (to the centre of each waterway) belonged to the lord of the manor of Ainstable, but both as a supplement to diet and as a commercial opportunity, fishing was at all times potentially an economic asset to Ainstable's people. The 1488 extent observed succinctly that fishing was worth 16d per year, without attempting to define manorial custom and usage. The 1568 survey described it as a free fishery for lampreys (the English word is used alongside the Latin *murenarum*), and added 'all the farmers of this fishery owe tolls for lampreys caught in this fishery to the lord of 1*d.* for every fresh lamprey and 2*d.* for every salted lamprey, and Anthony Hodgson is now farmer there'. There is no later surviving record mentioning lampreys, nor any other mention of fishing until 1638 when the manor court amerced four tenants (John and William Hodgson of Townhead, Robert Lowdin of Towngate and Matthew Lane of Beck) for fishing

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<sup>158</sup> 1861 census, households 2, 36, 38

<sup>159</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 8 Dec. 1835, 18 Apr. 1846, 16 Aug. 1881.

in the manor waters of Ainstable, no fine recorded. In 1640 the manor court listed the names of 37 'fishers with haaf nets' and added 'we cannot find that ever any man was troubled fishing with a haaf net time out memory of man'.<sup>160</sup> The manor had been forfeited to the Crown two years after the 1568 survey, and it may be that during the following 70 years the inhabitants took what they wanted from the waterways without any control or request for payment until shortly before the civil wars.

The Howards of Naworth became lords of the manor in the 1650s. In October 1653, their steward paid Peter Hodgson 'for bringinge in 40 salmons' 10s.;<sup>161</sup> and in 1687 Thomas Denton wrote 'the Earl hath a salmon fishing worth 10*li* a yeare'.<sup>162</sup> Writing in 1696, the Earl's steward Lancelot Simpson referred to disputes about fishing rights with John Aglionby who had recently purchased the Nunnery estates.<sup>163</sup> There are however no records of general measures to control fishing rights in Ainstable waterways between 1650 and 1730.

From 1734 the Earl of Carlisle's fishing rights were dealt with by lease subject to annual payments of £2 5s. for a 'fishgarth holme' and £2 for 'fishing'. The fishgarth is not mentioned after 1738, but the payments for 'fishing' continued into the 19th century, the annual payment rising to £50 in 1793 before falling back to £10 in 1853.<sup>164</sup> Arrangements like this have continued to the present day, the lessees now usually being fishing societies and

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<sup>160</sup> Quotations from the 1568 survey, and CAS (C), DHN C/1/7 (1640).

<sup>161</sup> *Naworth Estate and Household Accounts 1648-1660*, ed. C. Roy Hudleston (Surtees Soc., Vol. 168, 1958), 154.

<sup>162</sup> Denton, *Perambulation*, 324.

<sup>163</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/2/1.

<sup>164</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/624 to 629, 'Cumberland rentals 1723-1792'.

the rental commensurate with the popularity of salmon fishing in fine fishing rivers like the River Eden. The ownership of fishing rights has fluctuated from time to time, but the Ecroyds (who purchased from the Earl of Carlisle in 1890) own the largest part in 2023.<sup>165</sup>

## Mills

A miller called John was recorded in the Ainstable Lay Subsidy return of 1332: the 1488 extent referred to both Dale Mill on Croglin Water, and also a disused mill on the river Eden: Dale Mill was the lord's mill for the manor of Ainstable from at least 1488 until it fell into disuse in the late 19th century, but whether it was the mill recorded in 1332 is unclear. In 1488 there was recorded 'a corne milne called Dale Milne w[hi]ch is worth by yeare 6s. 8d.'<sup>166</sup> in 1568 there was 'a water corn mill called Dailemylne standing on the rivulet called Croglinbeck leased to John Huitson at will, rent 23s. 4d.'<sup>167</sup> In 1590 a crown lease to the Skelton family included a 'water mill called Dale Milne lying upon the waterway called Crogling Becke now or lately in the tenure or occupation of John Huitson', the rent being 23s. 4d. p.a.<sup>168</sup> The 1650 Parliamentary survey confirmed that the 1590 Skelton lease was still running.<sup>169</sup> In 1692 the Howards of Naworth leased the mill to Christopher Atkinson for 11 years at £9 p.a.<sup>170</sup> The mill would be re-let at intervals to new tenants throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, the last recorded actively milling tenant being Isaac Barnes from 1845 to

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<sup>165</sup> *Inf.* Charles Ecroyd.

<sup>166</sup> 1488 extent.

<sup>167</sup> 1568 survey.

<sup>168</sup> TNA, LR14/1024.

<sup>169</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/37b (1609/10); 1650 survey.

<sup>170</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/11.

1872.<sup>171</sup> The mill may still have been in use in 1881, when Isaac Barnes' widow Mary Barnes was enumerated as a miller, but ceased to function as a mill soon after that.

Dale Mill was for at least 350 years (and perhaps much longer) the place where the tenantry of Ainstable manor—most of whom were partly or wholly arable farmers—ground their grain. They were obliged by a royal decree in 1633 to grind at Dale Mill,<sup>172</sup> and in 1706 four tenants were fined for not doing so, their fines ranging from 6*d.* to 6*s.* 8*d.*<sup>173</sup> This is however the only such case recorded in the manor court rolls so it seems that the tenantry were generally content to use Dale Mill. They were also obliged to contribute to the repair of the mill building, but not the mill wheel and the dam which were maintained at the expense of the Lords of the manor.<sup>174</sup>

There was a second mill on Croglin Water within the Nunnery estate upstream from Nunnery Bridge. It was probably first built by the Graham family who held the Nunnery from 1553 to 1685,<sup>175</sup> and is first recorded in the description of the Nunnery estate when sold to Sir John Lowther.<sup>176</sup> Its use at that time was not stated but it seems likely to have been a corn mill for the use of Nunnery tenantry. The Nunnery estate was acquired by John Aglionby in 1694 and descended through three generations to Elizabeth Aglionby (1743–1822) whose husband Richard Bamber advertised in 1793 for tenants for 'the mills of Nunnery near Kirkoswald one

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<sup>171</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/652 and censuses 1851/71.

<sup>172</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/6.

<sup>173</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/139.

<sup>174</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/53 (1707).

<sup>175</sup> Above, Landownership.

<sup>176</sup> CAS (C), D/AY/1/357.

for grinding wheat, one for oats &c,.. with kiln loft and a small dwellinghouse, plentiful supply of water'.<sup>177</sup> One Thomas Thompson (later a shopkeeper in Kirkoswald) was the miller from 1809 to 1822;<sup>178</sup> and soon after that it came into the hands of William Richardson (later to be a prosperous timber merchant in Kirkoswald) who probably converted it to a saw mill for it was so described in 1846 when Richardson's partnership was dissolved.<sup>179</sup> In 1860 the Ordnance Survey described it as a sawmill, and in 1892, when the Nunnery Estate was advertised for sale, it was again so described. It would seem that for most of the 19th century the people of Ainstable enjoyed the services of both a corn mill and a saw mill. Millers were enumerated at nearby High Field in 1851 and 1861.<sup>180</sup>

#### *The Eden Valley Woollen Mill*

Although there is no record of major industrial activity in Ainstable, there was one modern instance of a firm in Ainstable using powered machinery to manufacture goods in quantity. The Eden Valley Woollen Mill was a late 20th century business which demonstrated, in a small way, what could be done of this kind in a small rural village: and perhaps it was not the first of its kind in Ainstable, although no records survive of anything similar at an earlier date.

Stephen and Belinda Wilson purchased Becksides in 1982 and converted the buildings for the manufacture and sale of woollens—clothing and furnishings. They installed a Dobcross loom

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<sup>177</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 13 Aug. 1793 (with thanks to Graham Brooks for this reference).

<sup>178</sup> Kirkoswald parish baptisms.

<sup>179</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 18 Apr. 1846.

<sup>180</sup> Censuses 1851 and 1861.

and a warping loom, both powered by electricity (without enhancement to the electricity supply), and created a small retail outlet for their products. In addition to their own labour they employed one assistant, Jen Notman. They sourced their wool from Yorkshire, and all designs were prepared by Stephen Wilson. They traded as 'The Eden Valley Woollen Mill'.

In 1999 they acquired premises in Armathwaite and began moving the business across the River Eden, but some processes and the retail sales continued at Beckside until 2007.<sup>181</sup>

### **Crafts and Trades<sup>182</sup>**

Weavers, using hand looms in their own homes, are recorded in Ainstable in 1332, 1587, 1623, and two in the 1630s (in one case using 'webster' to distinguish him from another man with the same name). There were probably many who owned looms and rural cloth making was widespread until the 19th century when this cottage industry was eclipsed by factory production. There is no record of a fulling mill in Ainstable.

Tailors in Ainstable are recorded in the 1730s (when there were two), and are mentioned intermittently in later years, but not after 1900. Christopher Watson of Row Head Ainstable who died in 1895 described himself as a master tailor in censuses between 1861 and 1891 and a trade directory in 1884.

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<sup>181</sup> *Inf.* Belinda Wilson.

<sup>182</sup> This account draws on the Lay Subsidy of 1332, Trade Directories 1829–1838, and Censuses.



Hugh Dodd of Ruckcroft (d. 1718) was a shoemaker (as well as a farmer), according to the inventory of his estate; but there are no other records of shoemaking in Ainstable before 1800. Thomas Lawrence (1772–1841) began his business as a shoemaker in neighbouring Staffield in the 1790s and moved home and business to Ruckcroft in about 1820, combining his work as a cobbler with being licensee of the Boot & Shoe.<sup>183</sup> Later he moved to Dale and was enumerated there, as a shoemaker, shortly before his death. Also, by 1829 one John Park (provenance unknown) was trading as a shoemaker in Ainstable, and during that century several other men were recorded as shoemakers, cloggers and/or bootmakers in Ainstable. Of particular note were Richard Moore of Bridge End who was born at Ravenstonedale in 1817 and traded as a master shoemaker in Ainstable from the 1840s to the 1890s; and William Hope of Towngate who was born at Hesketh in 1823 and traded as a master shoemaker in Ainstable from the 1860s to the 1890s, advertising several times for journeymen to help him meet demand. His son Thomas Hope continued the business into the late 1920s and succeeded the schoolmaster John Muschamp as clerk of the Parish Council. A third shoemaker trading in Ainstable in those years was William Duers who was born in Croglin in 1831, moved to Ainstable Towngate before 1871, and traded there until the turn of the century when he became a postman. The presence of three shoemakers in Ainstable in the late 19th century suggests good supplies of leather, but there is no record of a tannery in Ainstable.

Two families of stonemasons are recorded throughout the 18th century—the Hodgsons of Bank and the Marstons of High Dyke. Two stonemasons advertised in the 1829 trade

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<sup>183</sup> Below, Inns.

directory, and five were enumerated in the 1841 census. In 1861 five men (three of whom lived at Longdales) were enumerated as quarrymen: and John Hope and Thomas Watson, both of Longdales, are repeatedly recorded as stonemasons between 1841 and 1871. Timothy Rowe and his son Thomas traded from their home in Towngate as masons, monumental masons, slaters and builders from about 1850 to about 1914. Isaac Gill of Beckside, who was born at Alston, traded as a builder and monumental mason from the 1890s to the 1930s (in 1901 he was at Heather Glen). No large quarries are depicted on the OS maps of 1860, but provision was made for small freestone quarries and access to them in the Enclosure Award of 1821: there seems no reason to doubt the availability of local sources of good quality sandstone.

Carpenters were recorded in Ainstable in 1332, 1606, 1613 (two), and 1750. Three men advertised themselves as joiners and cartwrights in the 1829 trade directory, one being Edward Morland (1775–1865) who was born in Ainstable, first recorded as a carpenter in 1815, and died in Ainstable aged 89, a retired master joiner. Abraham Watson of Castledyke, Dale and Ruckcroft was recorded as a carpenter between 1813 and 1861: his son Thomas Watson of Towngate advertised in trade directories as a joiner and cabinet maker (and later as a painter and glazier) from 1847 to 1894. He was bankrupted in 1865 but seems to have recovered strongly. Another joinery business passing from father to son and grandson was that of Thomas Harrison of Hollybush House Ainstable, who was born in Ainstable and first recorded as a carpenter in 1861; his son William Graham Harrison advertised in trade directories from 1884 to 1929, and his son Graham Harrison continued the business in the 1930s. For most purposes these men could obtain timber locally, and (as explained above)

from the 1850s the Howards, and later the Ecroyds, employed a woodman to care for the extensive woodlands at Combes.

Blacksmiths are recorded in Ainstable from 1591 and there was at least one smithy, and later two, in Ainstable into the 20th century. Two blacksmiths advertised in the 1829 trade directory: William Gill of Gillfoot (born in Kirkoswald) and John Nicholson of Towngate (1792–1875) who was born in Lazonby. Nicholson's business was continued by his son Christopher (b. 1839) who was still advertising in 1897 but retired soon afterwards, after which the business was continued by John William Kendall (born Ainstable 1872) who traded until at least 1929. The provenance of the smithy at Gillfoot is unclear, but it seems to have been created in the early 18th century by Rowland Smith and was owned by a great grandson Joseph Smith when tenanted by a William Gill who died in 1830. Not long after that John Hope (born Longdales in 1813) was trading as a smith in Ainstable, a business advertised from 1847 to 1894 and then continued by his son William Hope to at least 1911. The Towngate smithy, but not that at Row, was recorded by the Ordnance Survey on its first edition (surveyed in the 1860s).

## **Services**

### *Retail*

Joseph Dodd and Elizabeth Morland were enumerated as grocers in the 1841 census of Ainstable village, but neither advertised in the 1829 and 1847 trade directories.<sup>184</sup> The first Ainstable grocer to advertise in this way was Henry Watson of Beckside, recorded both in the

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<sup>184</sup> 1841 census, households 82 and 99.

1851 census (again one of two grocers, the other being William Smith the parish clerk) and the 1858 trade directory. Watson continued to advertise in trade directories until 1897, dying in 1898. This was a significant family business in which both his wife Mary and, in 1881, four of their children were employed: it was continued by the widowed Mary Watson until her death in 1907 and then by their daughter Mary and her husband Thomas Harrison into the 1920s.<sup>185</sup>

### *Transport Services*

Carriers and carters are recorded from 1871. In the 1890s Sanderson Beaty carried to Carlisle on Saturdays and Penrith on Tuesdays. In 1900 Francis Duers advertised a service from the Red Lion to surrounding villages.<sup>186</sup> Edward Lancelot Proud began a service to Penrith in 1925: by 1929 he had established a motorbus service and a garage. His 1932 timetable listed four return services a day from Croglin/Ainstable to Carlisle.<sup>187</sup>

The construction of the railway from Settle to Carlisle with a station at Armathwaite provided employment for 18 Ainstable men during its construction in 1871. In 1881 three men were employed by the railway company, but in 1891 and 1901 only one.

### *Inns, Alehouses, and maltsters*

There were perhaps inns and alehouses in the parish of Ainstable well before 1700, but the earliest surviving record is that in 1707 of 'a little alehouse beside the road to Brampton' kept

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<sup>185</sup> Trade Directories *passim*, and censuses, particularly that of 1881, household 10.

<sup>186</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 18 Dec. 1900.

<sup>187</sup> CAS (C), DX/844.

by the wife of the vicar George Hodgson.<sup>188</sup> In 1746 six Ainstable persons (five men and one woman) were summonsed for non-payment of the license fee; and in 1753 a return of licensees in Leath Ward included four men of Ainstable parish, one of whom lived at Ruckcroft.<sup>189</sup> The first inn-site which can be identified with confidence, at Armathwaite Bridge End, was referred to in 1767 in the will of Matthew Wilson, innholder.<sup>190</sup> An inn (and perhaps a small brewery) was recorded at Dale in 1782, but it appears to have ceased to trade before 1820.<sup>191</sup>

The first Ainstable inns to be identified by name were the Red Lion at Armathwaite Bridge End in 1803, the Boot and Shoe at Ruckcroft in 1822 (kept by Thomas Lawrence shoemaker), and (also in 1822) the Crown at Ainstable.<sup>192</sup> Thomas Wilson's Dun Cow Inn at Church Garth Stile, Ainstable was first recorded in 1829.<sup>193</sup> By 1847, and until 1901, four inns were trading in the parish, the Red Lion at Bridge End, the Crown Inn and the Dun Cow in Ainstable village, and the Crown Inn at Ruckcroft (probably the Boot & Shoe renamed).<sup>194</sup> The Dun Cow appears to have ceased to trade after the death of Thomas Wilson in 1906: the two Crown Inns and the Red Lion all traded until 1939, and the Red Lion, renamed the Fox and Pheasant in 1984, is still trading in 2023.

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<sup>188</sup> Nicolson, *Misc. Acct.*

<sup>189</sup> CAS (C), QL/5 (1746); QL2/1 (1753).

<sup>190</sup> CAS(C) PROB (but the name of the premises was not stated in the will).

<sup>191</sup> *Cumberland Pacquet*, 17 Sept. 1782.

<sup>192</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 3 Jan. 1803; CAS (C), QL3/6 (1822) also listing the Red Lion.

<sup>193</sup> Parson & White, *Dir. Cumb. & Westmld* (1829); below, Social History.

<sup>194</sup> Decennial censuses and *Dir. Cumb., passim*.

Barley was widely grown in Ainstable and much used for malting by Ainstable maltsters. Christopher Thomson of Castledyke (d. 1567) held 7 bushels of malt, and between 1567 and 1721, eight Ainstable inventories included malt.<sup>195</sup> The enclosure award refers (when describing the layout of new roads) to malt kilns at Bascodyke and Dale, and John Hodgson of Dale described himself as a maltster in the 1841 and 1851 censuses.

## **SOCIAL HISTORY**

### **Social Structure and Character**

The lords (or lessees) of the township's two manors, Ainstable and Nunnery, would have been at various times significant sources of social influence. In the Middle Ages, the prioress might have been the more influential of the two—not just within the bounds of the Nunnery estates but within the township as a whole—both for spiritual leadership and as a landowner, though much would have depended on the character of each holder of the office. However, the balance may well have changed during the period of Dacre lordship (1447–1570)<sup>196</sup>, given the military significance of that family and the care they took to place reliable and authoritative retainers in each township. The Dacres' influence likely grew even further after 1473 when they became Barons Dacre of the North and Lords Warden of the Western March: an office held in turn by Lords Humphrey, Thomas and William Dacre until 1534.<sup>197</sup> Though

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<sup>195</sup> Christopher Thomson of Castledyke 1567, Isobel Thomson 1577, William Thomson 1589, Robert Barrow 1590, William Gibson of Dale 1607, Magdalen Watson (widow of the vicar) 1617, Leonard Barrow 1672, George Richardson of Bramery 1721.

<sup>196</sup> Above, Landownership.

<sup>197</sup> ODNB, s.v., Lord Thomas Dacre and Lord William Dacre.

not resident within Ainstable itself the Dacres favoured, from about 1500, their enlarged castle at Kirkoswald, less than 10 miles from Ainstable, as their principal seat.<sup>198</sup>

The men of Ainstable would have carried the same obligations of border service as all other men in the Western March, but being Dacre tenantry and near Kirkoswald, were perhaps amongst the most tried and trusted cadres within the forces available to the Dacres both for military expeditions (for example to meet the Scots at Flodden in 1513) and for response to incursion and pursuit of invaders.<sup>199</sup>

Both Nunnery and Ainstable came into the possession of the Graham family in the second half of the 16th century (the former by purchase in 1553 and the latter by lease in 1583). It is likely some members of the family were resident at the Nunnery soon after they acquired it: George Graham was certainly living there in 1620, as was his grandson Sir Richard Graham (c.1650–98) in 1673 and 1678.<sup>200</sup>

Contemporaneous with the Grahams was a family of minor gentry called Barrow. With successive heads of the family referred to as ‘gent’, they held the lease of the Ainstable manor demesne (with Low Hall) and purchased the advowson of the Church in 1550.<sup>201</sup> By the later 17th century, the family fortunes must have taken a downturn: Leonard Barrow, who

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<sup>198</sup> VCH, *Kirkoswald and Renwick*, 51.

<sup>199</sup> An example of hostile intrusion into Ainstable is the destruction of the hamlet of Dale in 1346: *Cal. Close R.*, 1288–96, 30.

<sup>200</sup> CAS (C), will of Thomas Lowthian 1673; Fetherstonhaugh A–17–10 (1678). Richard was a ‘gent’ in 1673 but had been knighted by 1678.

<sup>201</sup> TNA, C 43/6/132, IPM of Robert Barrow (son of Leonard) 1592; below, Religious Hist.

married a daughter of the royalist colonel Richard Kirkbride of Ellerton,<sup>202</sup> was described as 'Mr' in 1663 and when he died in 1672, his inventory revealed him to be impecunious. Any remaining wealth of the Barrow family was the subject of disputes in Chancery. Leonard's daughter Bridget married George Lowthian of neighbouring Staffield, who duly acquired the advowson and tithes of Ainstable Church.<sup>203</sup> Although resident on the far side of Croglin Water this family became much involved in the religious and social life of Ainstable, both George and Bridget Lowthian bequeathing money for the poor of Ainstable.<sup>204</sup>

The Howards, who acquired the manor of Ainstable in 1653,<sup>205</sup> were absentee lords, resident some 12 miles away at Naworth Castle. After the expiry of the Barrow lease in 1672 they leased Ainstable demesne and Low Hall to Simon Leach and his son John Leach. The Leach family would be resident at Low Hall until 1756.<sup>206</sup> Unlike the Barrows the Leaches were not described as gentry, but for many years were bailiffs of the manor and woodwardens of Combes.<sup>207</sup> Moreover, in 1711, 1728 and 1730 the manor court was held at Low Hall.<sup>208</sup> The Leaches departed from Ainstable in 1757, and Low Hall was rebuilt (the present building). The tenancy of the demesne frequently changed hands during the next 100 years: Thomas Harrison, lessee in 1836, was the first Ainstable guardian appointed to the Penrith Poor Law

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<sup>202</sup> *Pedigree Visitations*, 62 (the Barrow family did not receive separate attention in that work).

<sup>203</sup> Barrow litigation: TNA, C 7/501/8, C 6/238/46.

<sup>204</sup> Below, Social Hist.: Welfare.

<sup>205</sup> Above, Landownership.

<sup>206</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/8 (1651) and C/1/9 (1654); DHN C/1/14 to C/1/17 (1672 onwards).

<sup>207</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/624 to 629.

<sup>208</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/176/1.



Union;<sup>209</sup> and from 1913 to 1928 Thomas Thomlinson, lessee of Ainstable Hall, was a parish councillor. The lord of the manor in 2023, Charles Ecroyd, lives at Low House, Armathwaite.

Following its brief ownership by the Lowthers (1685–94),<sup>210</sup> the Nunnery became home to the Aglionby family. Henry Aglionby, who became the owner of the Nunnery in 1715 as part of his marriage settlement, began the rebuilding of the monastic buildings to create the (present) fine gentry residence, occupied by several generations of Aglionbys throughout the 18th century and the first half of the 19th.<sup>211</sup> The Aglionbys were county magistrates (as well as lords of the manor of Armathwaite), and, at least until the death of Francis (Yates) Aglionby in 1840, maintained within the township of Ainstable the, by then, traditional social status of the occupants of the Nunnery.<sup>212</sup> Francis Aglionby's widow Mary lived at Nunnery until her death in 1854, and was the last Aglionby to do so. After 1854 the Nunnery (now owned by Aglionby cousins in America) was leased: in 1861 to a vicar of Kirkoswald, and in 1871 and later decades to farmers, one of whom, George Joseph Dixon, would be elected a parish councillor in 1894.

Apart from the nobility and gentry so far considered, there were several farming families whose growing landholdings and prosperity attracted the honorifics 'Mr' or 'gent', hinting at social separation. An early example were the Hodgsons of Bascodyke who were recorded in

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<sup>209</sup> Below, *Social Hist.: Welfare*.

<sup>210</sup> CAS (C), D/AY/1/357.

<sup>211</sup> The Aglionby descent and ownership of the Nunnery - Henry (d. 1759); Henry (d. 1770); Christopher (d. 1785, unmarried); Elizabeth Bamber (eldest sister of Christopher, d. 1822); Francis (Yates) Aglionby (son of Christopher's sister Mary Yates, d. 1840); Henry Aglionby (Bateman) Aglionby (son of Christopher's sister Ann Bateman, d. 1854)

<sup>212</sup> For the Aglionbys generally, H. Summerson, *An Ancient Squire's Family* (Carlisle, 2007)

*Pedigree Visitations* (1665), beginning with Peter Hodgson of Bascodyke who died in about 1664. His son Rowland was bailiff of Ainstable in 1637; his grandson Peter was buried as 'Mr Peter Hodgson' in 1701 and dubbed 'gent' in his will; and a great-grandson Peter became 'gent' of Barrockfield (Hesket), and a principal beneficiary of the 1697 enfranchisement, becoming thereby freeholder of the Robinson and Crooke tenements (manor of Ainstable). This significant freehold estate was further enlarged in the next generation by William Hodgson of the Six Clerks Office, London, who, in 1718, enfranchised customary land held from Henry Aglionby within the manor of Armathwaite. These freeholds now descended through three generations to John Hodgson of Bascodyke who sold it in 1782 subject to a mortgage of £1,000.<sup>213</sup> A separate branch of the Hodgson family, resident in Dale, were much involved in the establishment of the endowed school in 1743 and its subsequent management.<sup>214</sup>

The translation in 1697 of many of the larger customary tenements to freehold led to several Ainstable farmers from the 1740s being qualified for enrolment as county jurors, and thereby to be listed with the honorifics 'Mr' or 'gent'. The Hodgsons of Bramery, the Dodds and Wilsons of Ruckcroft, the Slacks and Beaumonts of Bascodyke, the Withams of Castledyke, the Rumneys of Slack, the Smiths of Beckbrow, the Dixons of Towngate, and the Dodds of Dale were all accorded one or other of these honorifics in county jury lists.<sup>215</sup> Later in that century John Dixon of Ruckcroft and Thomas Smith of Beckside held the foremanship of the manor court jury alternately in most years between 1783 and Smith's death in 1807, and from

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<sup>213</sup> CAS (C), DX 83/1.

<sup>214</sup> TNA, CHAR 2/40 and ED 49/887; below, *Social Hist.: Education*.

<sup>215</sup> CAS (C) CRJ/2.

1807 to 1825 the foremanship was shared by John Dixon, Joseph Smith (son of Thomas), and John Fisher of Dale, all of whom were referred to as 'Mr'. The inference is that farmers were becoming more dominant in the affairs of the township (and the Lords of the Manor and their lessees less so) during the 18th and 19th centuries.

When the Ainstable Parish Council came into being in 1894, all eight of the parish councillors elected in that year (elections supervised by the schoolmaster John Muschamp) were farmers;<sup>216</sup> Muschamp was appointed clerk and treasurer of the parish council and served in that capacity without payment for 35 years (long after his retirement as schoolmaster).<sup>217</sup> Between 1894 and 1934 (when the present enlarged parish of Ainstable was created), farmers predominated, exceptions being Albert Richardson, innkeeper of the Red Lion, who served from 1898 to 1910, and Thomas William Hope, a shoemaker, who was elected in 1928 and resigned the following year to succeed Muschamp as clerk and treasurer of the council for a salary of £5 p.a. John Dodd Dixon of Ruckcroft chaired the parish council from 1899 to his death in 1921, and his brother George Joseph Dixon, lessee of the Nunnery, was also a parish councillor from 1894 to 1914.

### *Servants and Cottagers*

In 1486 Sir Richard Salkeld was listed as a freeholder for two tenements and one cottage in Ainstable;<sup>218</sup> and in 1568 six cottages were recorded, two each in Ainstable, Southeranfield

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<sup>216</sup> Below, Local Government.

<sup>217</sup> CAS (C), SPC 56/11.

<sup>218</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/201/4, an 18th century transcription and translation of a lost original part of the IPM of Lord Humphrey Dacre (d. 1485)

and Ruckcroft.<sup>219</sup> The crown survey of Ainstable manor in 1610, a damaged and incomplete document, lists 43 holdings which appear to include dwellings, and of these 14 were specified as cottages, equally divided between Ainstable and Ruckcroft.<sup>220</sup>

The settlement of Longdales (to the west of Ruckcroft) is first recorded in the 1630s, and is likely to have comprised (to begin with) cottages.<sup>221</sup> It seems that population pressure was causing cottages to be built in a previously unsettled part of the manor some distance removed from the village and its hamlets. A 1738 document listing ‘new rentals’ included cottages at Bramery, Beckside, Whinneyhouse, and three at Ruckcroft, the rents all being *4d.*, *5d.* or *6d.*<sup>222</sup> In 1841 there were 16 households enumerated at Longdales, 10 of which were headed by agricultural labourers.<sup>223</sup>

There are in early Ainstable wills a few references to wages owed to hired labour.<sup>224</sup> In 1633 John Pearson refers to ‘my maister John Wilson, vicar of Ainstable’ (similar to wording used by earlier testators in relation to the Grahams).<sup>225</sup> In Ainstable, as elsewhere, there probably was widespread engagement of young people as servants in husbandry, unrecorded before the Victorian censuses.

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<sup>219</sup> TNA, LR 2/212.

<sup>220</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/47.

<sup>221</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/5 (Ainstable manor court rolls: earliest mention 1634; ‘two cottages at Longdales’ 1642).

<sup>222</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/55.

<sup>223</sup> 1841 Census.

<sup>224</sup> For example, CAS (C), PROB/1576/WINVX151, inventory of John Lowden, wages for shearing.

<sup>225</sup> CAS (C), PROB1634/WX82.

The Aglionby household at Nunnery employed at least six female servants in the 1760s and 1770s.<sup>226</sup> In 1851 Mary Aglionby's household included 10 servants, five men (including a steward and a butler) and five women. 27 of the 112 households enumerated in Ainstable in 1851 included servants. Of these, 12 included a single servant (five men, seven women); and six included one male and one female servant. Seven of the larger farmers employed three or more servants in their households, notably Joseph Morley (the Demesne, 200 acres, four men and one woman), John Dixon (of Ruckcroft, 400 a., four men and two women), and John Relph (of Cross House, 270 a., four men and one woman). 38 other men and women described themselves as agricultural labourers, most of whom lived in their own homes. By 1901 these numbers had dropped sharply, with only 17 out of 87 households including resident servants. Of these, seven had only one (five men, two women). George Dixon of the Nunnery and Thomas Thomlinson of Ainstable Hall both employed five resident servants, in each case four men and one woman. Of 33 farming households, only 11 included servants; and the household of George Dixon J.P. of Armathwaite Hall included four women domestic servants.<sup>227</sup>

### **Community Activities**

The earliest recorded community society in Ainstable was the Ainstable branch of the Independent Order of Mechanics, created in 1864.<sup>228</sup> A branch of the Women's Institute was created in Ainstable in 1954, beginning with 48 members, on the initiative of Mrs A.J. Moffat, who was elected the first president. Mrs Moffat retired in 1956 and was succeeded by

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<sup>226</sup> CAS (C), DMBS, box 27; Summerson, *Ancient Squires Family*, 118.

<sup>227</sup> 1851 and 1901 Censuses.

<sup>228</sup> Kelly's *Dir. Cumb.* 1897, 21; *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*, 22 May 1909.

Mrs J.M. Longrigg of Bramery who retired in 1960. Membership had by this time declined sharply, and in March 1962 at a special meeting the nine remaining members voted to close the branch, citing lack of support.<sup>229</sup> There was in 1929 an Ainstable Branch of the Women's Unionists Association.<sup>230</sup> Community fund raising events in aid of the church and the school were a regular feature from the late 19th century.<sup>231</sup> Such events were usually held at the school (until it was closed in 1974), and at the Church Institute which was built in 1905 and continues to provide a useful and commodious place for meetings and events in 2020.<sup>232</sup>

There appear not to have been cricket and football clubs in Ainstable, but the Crown Inn hosted a darts team in the 1960s.

## **Education**

The earliest reference to schooling in the township dates from 1639, when Richard Wilkinson of Ainstable sued in the Ainstable manor court for payment for teaching children.<sup>233</sup> Between 1664 and 1669 John Hodgson was recorded as parish clerk and schoolmaster;<sup>234</sup> and in 1675/77 Michael Moses was recorded as schoolmaster, both of Ainstable.<sup>235</sup> In 1690 the Bishop of Carlisle, Thomas Smith, recorded in his register the name of Philip Musgrave as schoolmaster in Ainstable, and in 1693 that of Joseph Stubbs.<sup>236</sup> There is no record of a

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<sup>229</sup> CAS (C), DSO 390/1/1/1 and 390/1/2/1.

<sup>230</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 29 Jan. 1929.

<sup>231</sup> For example, an annual school tea party and entertainment: *Penrith Observer*, 29th Apr. 1890.

<sup>232</sup> CAS (C), PR96/45.

<sup>233</sup> CAS (C), DHN C1/39.

<sup>234</sup> CAS (C), DRC 5/2 and 5/3.

<sup>235</sup> CAS (C), DRC 5/4.

<sup>236</sup> CAS (C), DRC 1/5.

school building in the village before 1743, or where any of these men taught, but the church is likely.

In 1743 a messuage and tenement at the south end of Harras, together with a dwelling house, byre and some land, was purchased, for £50, from John and Elizabeth Fawell of Temple Sowerby. The purchasers were eight trustees, all yeomen variously resident in Ainstable, Ruckcroft, Bascodyke and Dale, and they were to hold the property upon trust for the payment of a schoolmaster and for the repairs of the Ainstable Free School.<sup>237</sup> It would seem that the farm building was adapted for use as a school, and for the next 230 years there was a school on this site, catering for the educational needs of the children of Ainstable.

The school was at various times referred to as a 'free school', or a 'grammar school', but after 1850 was, in official parlance, an 'endowed school'. In 1814 Chancellor Walter Fletcher wrote that the school was endowed with land situate in the village of Ainstable, let for £7 p.a., which had been purchased partly by subscription and partly with £40 left to the school by William Elan[d] shoemaker. The school was open to all children of the parish upon payment of quarterage of between 3s. and 5s.—equivalent to about 1/2*d.* or 1*d.* per week per child, depending, one supposes, upon the means of the parents to pay. The master, John Atkinson, was paid about £30 p.a.; the school was a 'common parish school', and the master was nominated by the vicar, the churchwardens and some six landowners (perhaps

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<sup>237</sup> CAS (C), DEC/27 - four of the eight trustees are identified above (in other contexts) as 'Mr'.

descendants of the 1743 trustees).<sup>238</sup> In 1818 it was recorded that there were from 20 to 30 children instructed, ‘all of whom pay quarter pence’, and that the master was ‘by no means fit for his situation’.<sup>239</sup> Both these sources refer to the will of Margaret Dixon who left the interest of £15 for the instruction of three poor children.<sup>240</sup>

The charitable origins of the school came under the scrutiny of the Charity Commission in 1820, and were the subject of lengthy correspondence with the vicar of Ainstable, William Smith.<sup>241</sup> Smith (who was probably Chancellor Fletcher's informant in 1814) also referred to the 1743 trust deed and said that he believed that the original bequest enabling the purchase of the endowment land was made by William Elan[d] shoemaker, but Smith had no copy of the will nor a list of the subscribers who made up the purchase moneys in 1743.

The will of William Eland, shoemaker of Appleby, had been proved at Appleby on 17 July 1724.<sup>242</sup> He left a wife called Janet and a daughter called Ann, the wife of Thomas Shaw, and at the time of Eland's death there were no grandchildren. Eland owned a close of land in Appleby called Crossmillbarn which he left to trustees for his daughter and her surviving children. Should she die without surviving children the land was to pass to the vicar of Ainstable in trust for the poor of Ainstable. The sole executor of the will was Thomas Shaw.

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<sup>238</sup> *The Diocese of Carlisle, 1814-1855: Chancellor Walter Fletcher's 'Diocesan Book', with additional material from Bishop Percy's parish notebooks*, ed. Jane Platt (Surtees Soc. Vol. 219, 2015), 202.

<sup>239</sup> Return of Schools 1818.

<sup>240</sup> The will of Margaret Dixon has not been found, nor any further information about the testator.

<sup>241</sup> TNA, CHAR 2/40.

<sup>242</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1724/WIN VX58; Eland is an old Ainstable name.



It appears that the trustees allowed him to take possession of Crossmillbarn Close, and that at some time during the next 20 years he sold it. When, in about 1743, Anne Shaw died without surviving children, the trustees were no longer able to fulfil the terms of the will, and it appears that they offered to replace the value of the land by a cash payment, a sum of £40 being accepted by the vicar of Ainstable. Whether or not the vicar and other officers of Ainstable township were aware of the testator's wish to benefit the poor, they felt free to apply the funds to the purchase of land for a school. That was the origin of the endowment, and there is no record that it was ever challenged.

A schoolmaster called Joseph Richardson was recorded from 1782 to 1804.<sup>243</sup> Richardson was succeeded by John Atkinson (1773-1857) of Nichol House, Ainstable, which he had purchased in 1805, who was the village schoolmaster for 50 years.<sup>244</sup> He was reportedly the son of a schoolmaster at Lazonby.<sup>245</sup> It seems that he married well and was able to afford to buy a good house and land (enough after 1832 for him to have the parliamentary vote), and to settle in Ainstable for a life-time career as village schoolmaster. In 1853 Atkinson retired and was succeeded by William Boustead of Blink Bonny, Ainstable.<sup>246</sup>

In 1858 Albert Marriott Wilson, vicar of Ainstable, raised the charitable status of the school with the Charity Commission.<sup>247</sup> Wilson was concerned that John Hodgson of Dale, who was

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<sup>243</sup> CAS (C), DRC5/81; add 'call books'.

<sup>244</sup> *Diocese of Carlisle*, 202; 1841 census, household 101; 1851 census, household 29.

<sup>245</sup> K. Harper, 'John Atkinson 1773-1857, Yeoman Schoolmaster', *CW2*, 38 (1983), 157f; the 1851 census confirms that Atkinson was born at Lazonby

<sup>246</sup> TNA, ED 49/887; 1861 census, household 1.

<sup>247</sup> TNA, ED 49/887.

‘generally considered to be the heir of the survivor of the 1743 trustees’, was not lawfully invested with the powers of trustee and was not fulfilling the duties of the office. The Commissioners put questions in writing to Hodgson to which he replied as follows:<sup>248</sup> there were six trustees; upon death of a trustee the survivors appointed a replacement; there were no particular rules and regulations for the management of the school; Boustead (who was 56) had been appointed in 1853 ‘by the parishioners’ and had ‘an English course of education’; he was full-time, and paid £16 10s. p.a. (the full income of the charity) and children were not charged for admission (but parents must pay for books and stationery); there were 28 boys and three girls in the school; education was English and according to the doctrine of the Church of England; the school building was in good repair and the trustees were satisfied with Boustead's performance.

The Commissioners agreed with Wilson that a scheme should be created for the management of the school, and in January 1860 a formal application was made under the signatures of the vicar and 11 other residents of Ainstable.<sup>249</sup> There was further enquiry about the extent of the landed endowment which was established to be a little more than seven acres, most of which had been purchased in 1743, with some land added by allotment under the enclosure award and a 'portion of ancient land which belonged to the school from time immemorial, for which there is no deed whatever.'<sup>250</sup> The scheme was approved by the Penrith County Court on 8 March 1860: it vested all the land endowment in the Official Trustee of Charity Lands, removed from office the previous trustees, and appointed new trustees including the vicar and

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<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>250</sup> TNA, ED 49/887.

the two churchwardens (all holding *ex officio*), and four other named trustees including John Hodgson of Dale.<sup>251</sup> The secular instruction was to include reading, writing, spelling, English grammar, arithmetic and other useful subjects authorised by the trustees - who also had power to fix 'head money' not exceeding 3*d.* per week per child or 6*d.* per week for parents able to afford more.

In May 1871, Wilson's successor, John Francis Morton, wrote to the newly created Endowed Schools Commission about the size of the school building, averring that the existing building was 'not more than half large enough to meet the requirements of the recent Education Act.'<sup>252</sup> The Commission agreed that a larger school should be built to include a schoolmaster's house, and asked the vicar to obtain estimates prior to the making of a further scheme. In August 1871, Morton raised the possibility that the landed endowment should be sold and the proceeds used towards the building costs. He averred that 'the trustees could not otherwise afford anything beyond the plainest and cheapest schoolroom and classroom - [being] ignorant Cumbrian farmers and largely endowed with the talent for economy so proverbial in this part of England.' The vicar thought that they would not agree even to employ an architect unless assured that the value of the land endowment would be applied to the building costs.<sup>253</sup> The Commission agreed, and in October an estimate (to include the cost of a house) of £550 was submitted, based on plans drawn up by George Watson, architect of Penrith. Grants of about £170 from various sources were anticipated, and the vicar thought that £100 might be raised from 'the poor working men' of the village. Watson's plans included

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<sup>251</sup> TNA, ED 161/2214.

<sup>252</sup> TNA, ED 49/887.

<sup>253</sup> TNA, ED 49/887.

a schoolroom 30 ft. by 18 ft., a class room 16 ft. by 14 ft., two porches, all necessary offices and conveniences, and a teacher's house.<sup>254</sup>

An amended scheme drawn up by the Commissioners received the royal assent in August 1872. In July 1873, Watson's plans were approved; by December 1873, the estimates had risen to £710; and in January 1874, the land was sold by auction for £435. A certificate of completion of the new school building was issued on 24 October 1874. The final cost was about £800, met by the proceeds of sale of land, grants of £50 from the Diocesan Education Fund and £165 10s. from the government, and £160 raised by voluntary contributions. The new building was a National Society School for 70 children, and the scheme provided for a governing body of six persons to be elected for five-year terms by the ratepayers of Ainstable in vestry assembled.<sup>255</sup>

The schoolmaster from 1875 to 1879 was Simon Langdale, a young man who began with great enthusiasm, and whose work impressed the vicar who wrote in December 1875 'school affairs are now being carried on a prosperous and satisfactory basis.' At the start of the new school year, in April 1876, there were 66 children in school, and in June the school inspector commented 'good—considering the difficulties caused by changes in mastership.' In July, at harvest, the numbers fell to 29, and in October, at the potato harvest, to 25. In February 1876, at the end of the school year, Langdale wrote 'grammar and geography have been introduced, previously unknown to the children'. But it seems that all was not well because in March

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<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.* and CAS (C), TSE/1/1; Watson was also architect for rebuilding the church in 1872.

<sup>255</sup> TNA, ED 103/133/36.

1876, Langdale's certificate was deferred. In 1877 the inspector was scathing, Langdale's certificate was again deferred and the grant was reduced by 10% for defective instruction in arithmetic. In November 1878, Langdale attended the Annual General Meeting of the Carlisle and District Teacher's Association, but things did not get better for him, and in March 1879, threatened with a reduction in pay and after another adverse report, he left, observing in the school log book that he had never been happy with the placement.<sup>256</sup>

In June 1879, Robert E. Williams from North Wales commenced as headmaster, finding 'the school in a very low state, standards backward in all elementary subjects and apparatus deficient.' In 1879 and 1882/3 there were a number of prosecutions of parents for the non-attendance of their children at school.<sup>257</sup> The inspectors' reports in 1880 and 1881 noted some improvement, in 1882 there was another reduction in grant, but in 1883 the report was favourable and the grant restored. Pupil numbers, except at harvest, had risen above 85. In March 1884, Williams resigned following the death of his wife. He was succeeded by John Herbert Bartram Muschamp, who came to Ainstable from Batley in Yorkshire, and would, after serving as village schoolmaster for 37 years, and clerk of the parish council for 35 years, live out his life in Ainstable to be buried in Ainstable churchyard in 1957 at the age of 96.<sup>258</sup>

In July 1884, a meeting of the ratepayers of Ainstable, convened by the Penrith Union under procedures laid down by the Elementary Education Act 1873, resolved that an application

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<sup>256</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/2/1 (Langdale's log book, continued by Williamson and Muschamp); *Carlisle Express*, 23 Nov. 1878.

<sup>257</sup> *Carlisle Express*, 27 Dec. 1879, and later dates *seriatim*.

<sup>258</sup> Oral evidence of Stanley Hewetson who remembered him from his childhood in 1939, and the family gravestone in Ainstable churchyard

should be made to the Education Department for the formation of a School Board, and also that a contributory district should be formed out of the parish of Cumwhitton comprising houses less than two miles from Ainstable school and more than three miles from Cumwhitton school, an arrangement which was approved by Cumwhitton parish the following year.<sup>259</sup> By a separate scheme in 1885 the proceeds of Margaret Dixon's charity were to be applied for the benefit of one or more poor children attending the school, selected by meritorious conduct and performance at examinations.<sup>260</sup> A School Board was elected in September 1884, and from 1885 the School Board received financial support out of the rates.<sup>261</sup>

Now reconstituted as a Board School and under Muschamp's direction, the school was well placed to progress the education of Ainstable's children together with some from neighbouring parishes. Muschamp's detailed records of pupil admissions from 1884 to 1918,<sup>262</sup> and the headteacher's logbooks from 1875 to 1912,<sup>263</sup> show that the number of registered pupils continued to increase during the 1890s, and attendance continued to suffer at harvest time, a problem which was still exercising Muschamp in 1903.

The numbers of new pupil admissions peaked in 1896 at 23 per year, but fell steadily after 1900 to about 10 per year in 1913. In all these years there were several new pupils from

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<sup>259</sup> TNA, ED/2/70/3.

<sup>260</sup> TNA, ED/886.

<sup>261</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 16 Sept. 1884; CAS (C), SPC/56/8; if this was to replace the loss of the income from the landed endowment, it was perhaps a continuation of unrecorded payments from 1874.

<sup>262</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/1 (information later than 1918 withheld under 100 years rule).

<sup>263</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/2/1.

Cumwhitton, and occasionally also from Staffield (part of the parish of Kirkoswald). Most children began school at age 4 or 5, but in every year there were some admissions of children before their 4th birthday, and also some aged 6 without any earlier school attendance. Most children left school very soon after their 14th birthday, and usually (if not leaving the area altogether) for work at home or elsewhere.

From December 1884, on the recommendation of the inspectors, an assistant teacher was employed to take the youngest children, the first appointment being Miss J.A. Bird of Gamblesby who taught at Ainstable for 11 years, generally to the satisfaction of the inspectors (but Muschamp thought her control of discipline was lax). When Miss Bird left in March 1895, she was briefly replaced by pupil teacher Annie Margaret Bowman, and then by the headmaster's daughter Edith Muschamp, both of whom left to attend Darlington Training College.<sup>264</sup> In 1898 Edith Muschamp was succeeded in turn by her mother, Ada Jane Muschamp, a certified teacher who continued (on and off) as assistant teacher for many years, not infrequently standing in for her husband during his absence and sickness. From 1898 to 1903, the annual inspectors' reports were 'very satisfactory', and in 1904 the school was 'considerably above the average', despite not infrequent periods of closure during epidemics of scarlet fever, chicken pox, bronchitis and diphtheria.

From the 1890s Muschamp developed a policy of retaining brighter girls for training as pupil teachers, and several of these went on to Darlington Training College and became fully qualified teachers. Annie Margaret, Sarah Emma and Ada Mary Bowman, all daughters of

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<sup>264</sup> CAS (C), DS 112/2/1, p. 268.

Thomas and Elizabeth Bowman of Bramery; Caroline, Emily and Sarah Ann Holliday, all daughters of Isaac and Sarah Ann Holliday of Raygarthfield, Stafffield; Rachel Ellwood, daughter of Thomas and Maria Ellwood of Farshfield; Frances Little of Holmewrangle, Doris Proud of Broomrigg, and Edith Cunningham - most of these went on from being pupil teachers at Ainstable school to become fully qualified teachers, for whom demand remained high for many years after the passage of the Education Act 1902. To judge by the case of Sarah Anne Holliday, Muschamp was an inspiring apostle of teaching. Mrs Sarah Peacock (as she became) retired from teaching at Topley All Saints Church of England School, Sheffield in 1958. A history of the school quotes several former pupils recalling her as 'the best teacher in the whole of their school lives'.<sup>265</sup>

Between 1900 and 1920 there were continuous falls both in the number of children on the school register (from 95 to 79) and the average attendance (from 39 to 35), but after 1920 numbers improved, and also average attendance, the figures in 1935 being 54 and 51 respectively.<sup>266</sup> In 1907 Caroline Holliday was appointed assistant teacher, and in 1909 her sister Emily Holliday. In 1913 the building was improved by the addition of two porches and improved sanitary arrangements, the work commissioned by the County Council with sanction from the Local Government Board to borrow £123 for the purpose.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> 'A History of Topley All Saints Church of England School', by Joan Stratford, p. 66; with thanks to Ian Peacock, grandson of Sarah Ann Holliday; her sister Caroline died in Sheffield in 1911.

<sup>266</sup> TNA, ED/2214.

<sup>267</sup> TNA, ED 21/2576.



Muschamp retired as headmaster in 1922, and was succeeded by Eva Margaret Robinson, followed in 1933 by William Banks.<sup>268</sup> A school library was created in 1922, and the school was frequently used for charitable and fund raising events.<sup>269</sup> Inspectors' reports during the 1920s and 1930s generally described the school as 'below average' and called for improvements in standards of teaching.<sup>270</sup> In 1939 an adjoining plot of rough ground was acquired and the children transformed it into a well-kept school garden.<sup>271</sup>

Throughout the Second World War, Ainstable children were taught by Banks and his assistant Miss Graham, who lived in Carlisle and commuted by rail to Armathwaite and from there on foot (two miles) to Ainstable. For some years the school day began at 9.30 AM to allow her time to arrive.<sup>272</sup> School numbers were increased during the war by at least five children evacuated from Newcastle upon Tyne.<sup>273</sup>

The passage of the Education Act 1944, which raised the school leaving age to 15 and introduced general secondary education, led to further major change both for Ainstable school and Ainstable's children. In 1947 children reaching the age of 14 (most of whom would before that time have then left school) now continued their education for a further year at Lazonby; and in December 1948 the Cumberland Education Committee (Northern Area) decided that, upon completion of new classrooms for Lazonby Secondary Modern School, all

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<sup>268</sup> CAS (C), C/E/7/6.

<sup>269</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/5, minutes of meetings of school managers.

<sup>270</sup> TNA, ED/21/25319.

<sup>271</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/9/1 (inspector's report).

<sup>272</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/5 (school managers' minutes) and oral evidence of Betty Parker

<sup>273</sup> Oral evidence of Betty Parker and Stan Hewetson; school photographs

Ainstable's children would be transferred to Lazonby on reaching the age of 11 (school bus transport provided). Ainstable School now became a County Primary School, taking children up to the age of 11, but nevertheless remained a two-teacher school.<sup>274</sup>

The survival of the school would now depend on the numbers of primary school age children in the school catchment area. The inspector's report in 1953, at which time the roster was 34, described it as 'a very pleasant place' with a resurfaced playground and a well-kept garden, a well-served dinner and valuable social training.<sup>275</sup> The head teacher, appointed in 1949, was Mrs Greenwood who resigned in 1958 and was succeeded by Miss Kennedy who served until 1966 when Miss E Holliday, the last Ainstable head teacher, was appointed. In 1967 the school managers were thinking about a new school building, but the reality was that falling numbers were leading inevitably to closure.

On 16 March 1973, there was a special meeting of the school managers with the teachers and county councillors. It was now proposed to close the school in September 1974: the younger children up to and including age 8, would transfer to Armathwaite, and the older children to High Hesket. Music would be taught at Armathwaite and swimming at Lazonby. A second meeting, involving parents, was held a fortnight later, the general view being that reduction to a single teacher school would disadvantage the children's education and that closure should not be opposed. The preference for secondary education was for William Howard School at

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<sup>274</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/6/1.

<sup>275</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/9/1.

Brampton. Ainstable County Primary School was closed in December 1974.<sup>276</sup> In 2020 the former school is a private house.

## **Welfare**

### *Poor Relief before 1834*

The township of Ainstable appointed overseers of the poor in 1642, and had probably been doing so for some years before that.<sup>277</sup> Funds for the relief of the poor were doubtless being raised by purvey from that time onwards but no overseers' accounts survive before 1791 (when the Cumberland purvey was replaced by rates).

It seems that the overseers were much burdened with demand for poor relief throughout the 18th century. Between 1725 and 1760, 12 men and women buried at Ainstable were described as 'poor' or 'pauper', inferring that they were in receipt of poor relief;<sup>278</sup> and there were several other persons settled in Ainstable who petitioned the magistrates in Quarter Sessions for relief (presumably having been denied help by the overseers): John Smith (imprisoned for debt) and John Marston (incapacity in old age) in 1728, Margaret Hodgson (a widow) in 1730, 1740 and 1742, Jane Rumley (a widow caring for her invalid daughter Mary Reed) in 1734, John Hodgson (imprisoned for debt) in 1739, Mary Reed (a deserted wife) in 1745, Jane Stockdale (disabled) in 1756.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> CAS (C), DS/112/5.

<sup>277</sup> Parliamentary Arch., HL/PO/JO/10/1/82/100.

<sup>278</sup> CAS (C), DRC/6/3 (Bishop's Transcripts).

<sup>279</sup> CAS(C) Quarter Sessions petitions - Q/11/1/149/18 and Q/11/1/150/10 (1728), Q/11/1/159/6 (1730), Q/11/1/174/7 (1734), Q/11/1/192/15 (1738), Q/11/1/198/15 (1740), Q/11/1/208/20 (1742), Q/11/1/221/19 (1745), Q/11/1756/1/1/3 (1756)

In 1758 the inhabitants of Ainstable and Cumwhitton, being ‘very extensive and greatly burthened with poor’, jointly petitioned Quarter Sessions for an order that ‘all allowances heretofore made by the court may be withdrawn in respect of such poor as shall refuse to go into the poor house erected to serve both parishes...’.<sup>280</sup> Between 1784 and 1792 burial records refer to six Ainstable people as ‘from the poor house’ - John and Jane Bowman (1774), Margaret Renwick (1775), Jonathan Reed (1781), Sarah Langhorn (1784) and Isaac Thompson (1786).<sup>281</sup> In February 1792, Thomas Nicholson, overseer for Ainstable Low Quarter, spent 1s. 6d. on ‘a journey to the poor house with Mary Foster’ for her lying in; in April he paid 14s. ‘poor house rent’ and 5s. to a midwife; and again 1s.6d. for a journey to ‘discharge the poor house’.<sup>282</sup> There is no record of where this poor house was, but it was large enough to include lying in accommodation for a pregnant woman. There is no mention of it in the day books of Ainstable overseers after April 1792; nor is it mentioned by Sir Frederick Morton Eden, writing in 1794.<sup>283</sup> It appears not to have been supported by Cumwhitton for very long after 1758, and a decision may have been made in the 1790s to dispose of it—or (perhaps) it was destroyed by fire.<sup>284</sup>

In any case, the Ainstable overseers already had alternative procedures for supporting those who could not support themselves, including children and the mentally infirm, as shown by

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<sup>280</sup> CAS (C), Q11/1758/2/1/27.

<sup>281</sup> CAS (C), DRC/6/3 (Bishop's Transcripts).

<sup>282</sup> CAS (C), PR96/21.

<sup>283</sup> Eden, *State of the Poor*, 45/6.

<sup>284</sup> CAS (C), PR64/14 (churchwarden's account book for Cumwhitton) is fragile and incomplete: there is a single record in 1762 to a 'boarding at ye poor house £3 10s.', and no surviving mention after 1770.

the case of Fanny Graham which is recorded by Sir Frederick Morton Eden in 1794: ‘the following are lunatics - F.G. aged 38; she has been 18 years under the parish care; her weekly maintenance is 4s. 6d.’ In 1791 overseer Nicholson recorded an agreement with Joseph Thompson of Shelton to ‘keep Fanny Graham for one whole year from 30 May 1791 at 2s. 6d. per week’; and at about the same time he paid £4 11s. to Thomas Wilson for keeping Fanny Graham for 26 weeks at 3s.6d. per week (an earlier arrangement, replaced by the contract with Thompson). In 1795 she was back with Thomas Wilson, and in 1796 with John Threlkeld, from whom she was transferred to John Dodd of Ruckcroft (in which year also the overseers agreed to meet half the rates of six men who had been 'keepers of Fanny Graham'). In 1799 she was back with Thomas Wilson again and she was still supported by the overseers in 1804.<sup>285</sup>

In these years there were several recorded cases of unmarried mothers in need of support. Rachel Hodgson for whom the overseers negotiated a bastardy bond with an Ainstable family in 1787; Rachel Hogarth (bastardy bond from a man who lived in Canonby in 1793); Ann Nichol who received weekly payments of 2s. for her child throughout the 1790s; Ann Noble whose son John was apprenticed at the age of 11 with John Scott of Carlisle in 1796;<sup>286</sup> Tamar Sarginson (bastardy bond from a man who lived in Crosby Ravenworth in 1786 - she continued to receive weekly support until 1803); Ann Maxwell (boarded out in 1802 and provided with a midwife in 1803—her son was apprenticed to a farmer in Bascodyke in 1809).<sup>287</sup> Bastardy orders were obtained from the magistrates in five cases between 1806 and

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<sup>285</sup> Eden, *State of the Poor*, 46; CAS (C), PR96/21 (1791); PR96/22/1 (1795/1803).

<sup>286</sup> CAS (C), PR96/26.

<sup>287</sup> CAS (C), PR96/27 (register of apprentices).

1826, all of which required payments to the overseers by both the father and the mother of the child.<sup>288</sup> No doubt unmarried mothers in Ainstable had been seeking help ever since overseers were appointed in the 17th century: numbers of illegitimate baptisms in Ainstable church rose sharply after 1770.<sup>289</sup>

There were other cases which required unusually high expenditure. A child called John Milburne, perhaps mentally or physically infirm, was boarded out from 1796 to 1802 in various homes, for which payments from 4s. to 6s. per week were made. Margaret Shepherd was placed with the Committee of St Mary's Carlisle for £1 a month in 1798 and 1799—the only recorded Ainstable case of a poor person placed in a workhouse in Carlisle (and there are no recorded cases before 1836 of Ainstable poor being sent to either Penrith or Brampton workhouses).<sup>290</sup> The case of Patience Linehouse and her children is recorded from 1786, when—with her then husband Isaac Thompson and four children—she was removed by order of the magistrates from Penrith to Ainstable;<sup>291</sup> her husband Isaac was buried 'from the poor house' later that year, and Patience remarried Thomas Linehouse a widower of Penrith; by 1792 she was back in Ainstable receiving support for herself and two of her Thompson children which continued to 1803.<sup>292</sup> Her daughter Margaret Thompson gave birth to an illegitimate son in 1802 and later married Thomas Nansen, weaver of Orton, with whom the overseers negotiated an apprenticeship for Margaret's son.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> CAS (C), PR96/30 (bastardy orders).

<sup>289</sup> CAS (C), DRC/6/3 (Bishop's Transcripts).

<sup>290</sup> CAS (C), PR96/22/1.

<sup>291</sup> CAS (C), PR96/25.

<sup>292</sup> CAS (C), PR96/22/1.

<sup>293</sup> CAS (C), PR 96/26 and 27.

Thomas Wilson is repeatedly mentioned in the overseers' day books of the 1790s in relation to a variety of poor persons, including Fanny Graham and John Noble (above). In April 1796 a payment to Thomas Wilson of £2 for 'poor house rent' was recorded, and in 1799 £2 12s. 6d. (not stated to be 'poor house rent'); and in May 1800 a Mr Richardson was paid for 'writing poor house contract' which seems to suggest that a previously informal arrangement (following the loss of the previous poor house) was now official policy. Thomas Wilson's home at Church Garth Stile, Ainstable, may have been extended for use as the township poor house.<sup>294</sup> By 1829 Thomas Wilson kept the Dun Cow Inn, so perhaps the poor house arrangement had by then been discontinued and a new use found for the extended building.<sup>295</sup>

The detailed records of the overseers from 1791 to 1804 give the impression of careful attention to the duties of the office. The overseers, of whom there were two, for Low Quarter (including Ainstable village) and High Quarter (including Ruckcroft), claimed expenses but were otherwise unremunerated; and the office was passed, like all township offices, into other hands each year. In 1796 both overseers travelled to Great Salkeld to see 'John Waugh on his daughter's account', to Carlisle 'on Harrow's account', again to Carlisle 'to get a settlement with Mr Mounsey' (probably the lawyer acting for the father of an illegitimate child), to Brampton to collect arrears of payment (presumably paternity), to Penrith to get the rates signed by the magistrates. In 1799 there were journeys to Kendal, Kirkby Stephen (twice), Carlisle (twice), and Langwathby; and in 1802 to Cockermouth (probably in connection with

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<sup>294</sup> CAS (C), PR96/22/1.

<sup>295</sup> Parson & White, *Dir. Cumb. & Westmld.* (1829).

Mary Foster who was farmed out to that town), Carlisle, Armathwaite and Penrith. In 1802 and 1804 relief was paid to travellers and to disabled seamen, perhaps a consequence of the fighting at sea during the wars with France—but Ainstable is far from any port. The Ainstable overseers, in addition to weekly payments (usually 2*s.* or 3*s.*) also helped with payment of house rent, and the acquisition of clothing and footwear for persons receiving relief.<sup>296</sup>

In 1794 Sir Frederick Morton Eden recorded annual expenditure as £65 18*s.*, of which £49 was paid to a ‘contractor’ (Thomas Wilson perhaps) in respect of seven elderly women, mostly widows, the cost of one of whom was shared equally with Cumwhitton.<sup>297</sup> In 1798/9 four collections of rates yielded £76 17*s.* 8*d.* against disbursements of £96 (some of the difference being met by paternity payments). Expenditure would rise sharply after 1800: in 1803 £148 (6*s.* 8*d.* per head); in 1813 £246 (11*s.* 4*d.* per head), falling back in 1831 to £92 (3*s.* 2*d.* per head).<sup>298</sup>

#### *Poor Relief after 1834*

After the formation of the Penrith Poor Law Union (PPLU) in 1836 the first guardian appointed for Ainstable and Ruckcroft was Thomas Harrison, lessee of Low Hall. Ainstable was within the second district of the PPLU for which Joseph Sander, of Vicarage Farm, Ainstable, was appointed relieving officer in 1837.

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<sup>296</sup> CAS (C), PR96/22/1.

<sup>297</sup> Eden, *State of the Poor*, 46.

<sup>298</sup> Poor Law Commission, 1st Report 1835, answers to rural queries



Minutes of the PPLU in 1836/7 contain no reference to any previously existing poor house in Ainstable.<sup>299</sup> An early consequence of the creation of the PPLU was the admission of some residents of Ainstable to Penrith Workhouse (at first the old workhouse, and from 1839 the new building). Josiah Bird of Ainstable, aged 84, was admitted in June 1837 and was buried at the workhouse in 1840.<sup>300</sup> In December 1837, Henry Wilson (an Ainstable weaver aged 64) and his wife were admitted, and he was ordered to assign his pension (military perhaps) to the PPLU: Wilson was readmitted in August 1838 and eventually buried at the workhouse in 1857, aged 85.<sup>301</sup> Pregnant women were also amongst the first users of the workhouse, Isabella Sewell, Mary Ann Slack and Sarah Nicholson, all of Ainstable, gave birth at the workhouse in 1838, and all three children died in infancy and were buried there. In the following 30 years another 18 young women of Ainstable would use the workhouse as a lying in hospital, half of the children being buried there.<sup>302</sup>

From 1837 the PPLU assessed every parish for regular quarterly payments (Ainstable £53 8s. per quarter), and debited the charges for use of the workhouse and out-relief, with an additional administration charge. For the four quarters of 1838, the total figures for Ainstable were: in-relief £42 10s. (throughout that year there were not less than nine Ainstable persons in the workhouse); out-relief £126 10s.; administration charge £20 13s.; the total being a little under £200 and comfortably within the total of the quarterly assessments.<sup>303</sup> Although their task was now restricted to administration (policy and decision-making being the prerogative

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<sup>299</sup> CAS (C), SPUP/1.

<sup>300</sup> CAS (C), SPUP/1 and SPUP/5/3.

<sup>301</sup> CAS (C), SPUP/1, pp.196 and 286; SPUP/5/3.

<sup>302</sup> CAS (C), SPUP/5/1 and SPUP/5/3.

<sup>303</sup> CAS (C), SPUP/1.

of the PPLU and the relieving officer), the township continued to appoint overseers and they continued to keep accounts of money raised by rates and paid to the PPLU. Between 1868 and 1895, the annual payment to PPLU varied between a low of £123 (a rate of 11*d.* in the £) in 1892, and a high of £270 (1*s.* 8*d.* in the £) in 1875, and in most years was between £180 and £220. The overseers' accounts also show payments to the Leath Ward Highways Board up to 1880; from 1874 to the Rural Sanitary Board; and from 1885 to 1896 to the Ainstable School Board; and after 1896 to the newly created Penrith Rural District Council.<sup>304</sup>

### *Charitable bequests*

In 1749 Charles Smalwood, newly installed as vicar of Ainstable, composed a terrier of church property.<sup>305</sup> He said (*inter alia*) 'belonging to the said parish is the sum of £53 now in the hands of Thomas Hodgson of Ainstable Towngate upon mortgage: the use of which money is solely supplied to the relief of the poor of the parish.' A later incumbent, William Smith, writing to the Charity Commission in 1822, gave greater detail. A sum of £53 was in his hands (with John Dixon as co-trustee), derived from the wills of George Lowthian of Stafffield Hall and Dumfries (d. 1735), who left £20 for the poor of Ainstable, and his widow Bridget Lowthian (d. 1745) who left £33 for the same purpose. Smith and Dixon paid 5 per cent. on the stock, yielding £2 13*s.* p.a. which they distributed on St Thomas Day (21st December) to 'between 8 and 10 needy persons not in receipt of parish relief in sums varying according to their needs'.<sup>306</sup> Their son Richard Lowthian, who died in 1782, left a further £5

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<sup>304</sup> CAS (C), SPC/56/8; Below, Local Government.

<sup>305</sup> CAS (C), DRC/22/3.

<sup>306</sup> TNA, CHAR 2/40; for the Lowthians; above, Social Structure and Character, and below, Religious History.

for this purpose, the proceeds of which was distributed in William Smith's time as vicar by Richard Lowthian Ross.<sup>307</sup>

Directories from 1901 to 1938 refer to the George and Bridget Lowthian bequests as £2 7s. (the annual interest rather than the stock itself) and record that this sum 'is distributed in money'. No mention is made of the Richard Lowthian bequest, which had by that time, it seems, been lost, as also seems now to be the case with the other Lowthian bequests.

## RELIGIOUS HISTORY

### Parochial Origins

There have been sites of religious worship in Ainstable since the Middle Ages. A priory of Benedictine nuns was established by Croglin Water by 1200.<sup>308</sup> The parish church of St Michael and All Angels is first recorded in 1291, the dedication to All Angles was reputedly added after 1847.<sup>309</sup> The ecclesiastical parish was coterminous with both the manor, township and remained so after the civil parish was joined with Croglin and part of Cumwhitton in 1934.<sup>310</sup> The parish remained a single entity until October 1954, when the benefices of Ainstable and Armathwaite were joined.<sup>311</sup> In 1976 the benefice of Ainstable-with-

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<sup>307</sup> The will of Richard Lowthian has not been found, and not all sources agree with William Smith.

<sup>308</sup> *VCH II* 189.

<sup>309</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, V, 291; Revd B Dawson, *Ainstable Church, Yesterday and Today*, 2014.

<sup>310</sup> CAS (C), C/307 Cumberland Review Order 1934.

<sup>311</sup> The parish of Armathwaite was created in 1745 out of Hesket in the Forest, previously it had been a chapel of ease. Vicars of Ainstable at times were also curates of Armathwaite.

Armathwaite was dissolved and a new benefice of Kirkoswald, Renwick, Ainstable, Hesketh-in-the-Forest and Armathwaite was created.<sup>312</sup> From 1994 the parish of Ainstable was joined with Armathwaite, Calthwaite, Hesketh, Hutton-in-the Forest, Ivegill and Skelton in a Team Ministry.<sup>313</sup> In 2018 the group became the Inglewood Group of Churches and in 2019 the team vicar for the Group resigned and the new Team Vicar led discussions as to whether Ainstable church should be closed. In April 2022, Ivegill left the Group and the parish of Plumpton Wall joined.<sup>314</sup> In March 2024, the vicar resigned and responsibility for the parish passed to the Rural Dean.<sup>315</sup> Holy Communion once a month was then the only service held at Ainstable, the other churches in the Group held at least two services a month.

### **Descent of the Advowson and Clergy**

In the Middle Ages, the parish church was appropriated to Armathwaite Priory but by whom and when is not known (cf. The Priory). It is assumed that the vicar was a chaplain appointed by the priory and who probably also administered to the nuns. At the Dissolution, the priory and the rectory of Ainstable were leased to Leonard Barowe (*Barrowe, Barrow*) of Armathwaite for 21 years.<sup>316</sup> The subsequent ownership becomes uncertain, as on 22 December 1549, Edward VI sold to John Peryent, knight, and Thomas Rewe, gentleman, the rectory and advowson of the vicarage belonging to the priory of Armathwaite.<sup>317</sup> Two days

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<sup>312</sup> CAS (C), DRC/22/3

<sup>313</sup> CAS (C), PR96/104–15.

<sup>314</sup> Personal communication Rev. Mark Houston.

<sup>315</sup> *Inglewood News and Notes: The local magazine for the communities of the Inglewood Benefice and surrounding area*, March 2024.

<sup>316</sup> *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, V, 291; printed in Hutchinson, I, 197–200; *VCH Cumb.*, II, 191; *Letters and Papers Hen VIII*, xiv (1) 606, 67b, 1539–40 (1894).

<sup>317</sup> *Cal. Pat. R. 1547–53*, 8–9. This purchase was one of many including Alston, for which the pair paid £3875 10s. 11¾d.

later, on 24 December 1549, Peryent and Rewe sold the title to Leonard Barrow, father of Robert Barrow.<sup>318</sup> And in March 1552, Edward VI sold to William Graham the lands and premises that had belonged to the priory. The *Letters Patent* addressed to Graham refer to the indenture made to Leonard Barrowe, *inter alia*, but do not mention the advowson, rectory or vicarage, which appeared to have remained with Barrow.<sup>319</sup>

Thereafter the advowson passed through the families of Barrow and Lowthian<sup>320</sup> until purchased by Francis Aglionby in the late 19th century and then through the Aglionbys, until acquired by Thomas Ecroyd in November 1920 and with whose descendants it remains. The separation of the lands of the priory and the advowson sowed the seeds of future disputes over the maintenance of the church and particularly the chancel.

### **Income and Endowment**

In 1291 the church was assessed at £10 9s. 5d. and the vicar's benefice was valued at £5 4s. 8d..<sup>321</sup> This confirms that an ordained vicarage had been established before 1291 but there are no presentations to it in the surviving registers of the medieval bishops of Carlisle. At its dissolution the priory was paying 12d. per annum to Wetherhal Priory, 2s. 6d. for procurations to the bishop of Carlisle and a stipend of 106s 8d for the chaplain to the

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<sup>318</sup> TNA, C 43/6/132: IPM Robert Barrow, 1592.

<sup>319</sup> *Cal. Pat. R. 1547–53*, 383–84.

<sup>320</sup> ‘Clergy and Patrons’, *Crockford’s Clerical Directory*, 1920: Conveyance of advowson and right of presentation of and to the vicarage of St Michael’s church, Ainstable, from Arthur Charles Aglionby Aglionby to Thomas Backhouse Ecroyd, of Low House, Armathwaite, 20 Nov. 1920. Copy in Personal Papers of C Ecroyd, Low House, Armathwaite.

<sup>321</sup> *Taxatio. Eccl.*

nunnery.<sup>322</sup> In 1302 the bishop obtained a remission of one third of the papal tenth for the church and vicar due to devastation caused by the Scots.<sup>323</sup> The effects of increased intensity of Scottish raids after the defeat of Edward II at Bannockburn in June 1314, were further aggravated by the deterioration in the weather and widespread disease among cattle and sheep in 1317.<sup>324</sup> There was no return for Ainstable in 1318 but in 1319 the situation had improved somewhat and the church was taxed at 12s. 11d. and the vicar at 5s. 10d.

It is not known whether the church building was ever attacked by the Scots but the whole area east of the Eden suffered from Scots raids. In 1317 the nuns of the priory claimed they suffered so much loss from the Scots that the king granted them leave to pasture their beasts in Inglewood Forest.<sup>325</sup> Thirteen years later they successfully petitioned Edward III to be excused £10 which they owed for provisions purchased from his father when their lands and rents had been greatly wasted by the Scots.<sup>326</sup> Carlatton, a parish five km. to the north, was burnt on a number of occasions and eventually disappeared from the record.<sup>327</sup> Hamelton or 'le Dale' (Dale), where the priory had land, was destroyed by the Scots after 1345.<sup>328</sup> Even if Ainstable church itself was not destroyed or damaged religious life would be seriously affected. The next assessment of the church was not until 1535 when the vicarage net income

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<sup>322</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon*, v, 271-3; *VCH, Cumb.*, ii, 191.

<sup>323</sup> W. N. Thompson, *Register of John de Halton, bishop of Carlisle*, pt. 2 (Canterbury and York Society, 1908), 195–96;

<sup>324</sup> R. L. Storey, *Register of John Halton, bishop of Carlisle, 1292–1324*, pt. 3 (Surtees Society, 1995), no.194.

<sup>325</sup> *Cal. Pat. R.*, 1324-7, 28.

<sup>326</sup> TNA, SC 8/45/2230; *CPR 1330-4* 191; TNA, Parliamentary Petition 2929; *CPR 1330-4*, 191.

<sup>327</sup> T. H. Graham, 'Carlatton', *CW2*, 20 (1920), 19-27; Colm McNamee, *The Wars of the Bruces, 1306-1328*; Summerson, *Medieval Carlisle*, 2 vols (CWAAS, Extra Series 1993).

<sup>328</sup> *Cal. Close, 1346-9*, 30.

was £8 8s. 2d., of which £6 was paid to the priory.<sup>329</sup> George Hodgson, vicar in 1703, compiled a list of glebe lands.<sup>330</sup> With income from the glebe and the Queen's Bounty Scheme, founded in 1704, the vicarage was valued at £35 and in 1777 it was worth about £40.<sup>331</sup> In 1934 the net value of the benefice was £325.<sup>332</sup>

The parish Terrier for 1777 sets out in detail the rights of the vicarage and includes a record that maintenance of the churchyard wall was down to the parishioners as a boon service. Payments for milk, calves, milk cows, foals and the boons in kind – hay, goose, pigs, sheep, lambs, wool, fleece – were worth about £38 yearly.<sup>333</sup> In the 1821 Inclosure Award, in lieu of tithes the vicar was allotted 470 acres of waste which in the Tithe Award of 1841 was wholly let, by 1950 most of the glebe had been sold.<sup>334</sup>

### Clergy Houses

The earliest record of a vicarage house is by Bishop Nicolson in his visitation of 1703 when he says the 'Vicarage House is extremely ruinous; and he (the vicar George Hodgson) chiefly resides at a little Ale house kept (by the side of the Road to *Brampton*) either by his Wife or Daughter.'<sup>335</sup> In 1733 the churchwardens complained that the vicar 'has demolished or part pulled down part of his vicarage house or outhouse belonging to it without lawful licence';

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<sup>329</sup> Hutchinson, I, 197–200; also Bouch, *Prelates and People of the Lake Counties*, Appendix XIII, 472

<sup>330</sup> Nicholson's *Miscellany Accounts*, 213.

<sup>331</sup> N&B, II, 431.

<sup>332</sup> *Carlisle Diocesan Calender (CDC)* 1934.

<sup>333</sup> CAS (C), DBS/4/3/39, Terrier 12 July 1777.

<sup>334</sup> CAS (C), DB74/box 332-333.

<sup>335</sup> Nicholson's *Miscellany Accounts*, 111.

they repeated the complaint in 1734.<sup>336</sup> There must have been some remedial work carried out in the following 100 years as when Chancellor Fletcher visited in 1821 and in 1828, he noted that the vicarage was ‘tolerably good’.<sup>337</sup> But the state of the vicarage house was again of concern in 1833 when the newly appointed vicar Revd J Bird, went to court seeking damages from the trustees of the previous vicar for ‘dilapidations’ to the parsonage house.<sup>338</sup>

The Revd A. M. Wilson, appointed vicar 1850, in 1854 advertised for tenders for the building of a new vicarage house on a site nearer the church and the house was completed by the end of 1855.<sup>339</sup> The old vicarage was let, a farmer, Mr Antony Sander, was living at ‘the Old Vicarage’.<sup>340</sup> A new wing was added in 1900 giving the house five bedrooms and further alterations were made in 1959.<sup>341</sup> In 1975 when the benefice of Ainstable was joined with that of Kirkoswald the house was sold with an acre of grounds and four acres of land and a cottage.

## **Religious Life**

### *Medieval*

As noted above, there are no presentations to the vicarage of Ainstable recorded in the surviving medieval bishops’ registers. A few vicars of Ainstable do occur in the registers when employed on diocesan business, or as witnesses to a will or charter. The earliest known

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<sup>336</sup> CAS (C), DRC/5/7.

<sup>337</sup> *Diocese of Carlisle*, 201, 204.

<sup>338</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 23 Feb. 1833.

<sup>339</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 19 May 1854.

<sup>340</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 24 Aug. 1866.

<sup>341</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/3/Plan/3067.



vicar of Ainstable is William who in 1223 x 1256, was witness to a grant to Lanercost Priory by Eda daughter of Michael del Dale of Ainstable of five acres of her demesne in Ainstable; in the confirmation of the grant by her sister Helen, the vicar is named Waltero.<sup>342</sup> In 1305 the vicar of Ainstable was on a panel to inquire into the presentation to Skelton church.<sup>343</sup> In 1310 Henry, vicar of Ainstable was witness to a quit-claim by William de Ainstable to his mother Isabella, in fee simple, of all his lands in the field and territory of Ainstable.<sup>344</sup> The parish church appears as paying 2s. in *synodia* dues in 1338.<sup>345</sup> In the Lay Subsidy of 1332, one Ian Capell (Ian of the chapel?), a priest, is the wealthiest person (£16 10s.) listed but whether he was the vicar is not known; the goods of the vicar's servant, Matilda, are assessed at £1 1s. 3d., so he may well have been. In the same year the vicar with other vicars of the diocese was appointed to an inquiry into a vacancy at Melmerby.<sup>346</sup> The vicar also served on an inquiry into a disputed presentation to Arthuret church in April 1337.<sup>347</sup> In 1372 the vicar named as Eudes, served on a panel inquiring into a disputed presentation to Kirkland rectory and, in 1377, was probably the Ivo, who with Thomas of Carlisle, clerk, and William Kyrkebride, chaplain, involved in a dispute arising out of a gift of two parts of a third of the manor of Skelton, which they had entered without the king's licence. For 20s. the king forgave them and restored the two parts.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> *Lanercost Cartulary*, nos. 73, 74. Todd notes the different names and also that the date is the same for both charters

<sup>343</sup> *Register of John de Halton*, pt 2, 238.

<sup>344</sup> W. N. Thompson, 'Two Old Deeds of the Sanderson Family', *CW2*, vi (1906), 284; T. H. Graham, 'The Manor of Ainstable', *CW2*, xx (1920), 47–52; cf. Landownership.

<sup>345</sup> *Register of John Kirkby and Register of John Ross*, II 1–3.

<sup>346</sup> *Register of John Kirkby and Register of John Ross*, I, 26.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>348</sup> *Cal. Pat. R.*, 1374-77, 443.

In the Poll Tax of 1379, Henrico vicar of Aynstaplith, was assessed for 2s. but for the following year, the entry reads '*oneratur super comptum pro quolibet rectore seu vicario benefic' presbitero ijs*' (roughly, 'the account is charged for any rector or vicar who benefit as priest 2s.').<sup>349</sup> It appears that Henrico probably was no longer vicar in 1380 or had been so only for a short time as in the same year, on 5 September, John, vicar of Ainstable, made a his will; he asked to be buried in the churchyard and gave 18s. for oblations and 26s. 8d. for a wake for neighbours.<sup>350</sup> The next mention of a vicar of Ainstable is William de Moore whom Sir John Denton, lord of the manor, enfeoffed William with the manor of Ainstable in 1446 and who in his turn, in 1447, enfeoffed Thomas Dacre, Phillipa his wife, and William Marshall, vicar of Kirkoswald (cf Landownership).<sup>351</sup> The next vicar was referred to in 1490 when he was an unnamed tenant of Wetherhal Priory, paying 6d. in rent for a garden.<sup>352</sup>

In May 1535, Ainstable parish church was assessed at £8 8s. 2d. including glebe, tithes and oblations, £6 of which was paid to Armathwaite Priory as the patron. At the time, the vicar was Ricus Chydren [sic]; whether he was also the chaplain to the nuns who received a stipend of 106s. 8d. is not known.<sup>353</sup> One of the king's two commissioners touring Cumberland and Westmorland that year, visited the priories of Lanercost and Armathwaite.<sup>354</sup> At the latter only three nuns and the prioress were found and there nothing else to report.

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<sup>349</sup> Kirkby, 'Two Tax Accounts of the Diocese of Carlisle', *CW2*, lii (1952), 77, 83.

<sup>350</sup> *Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395*, no. 561.

<sup>351</sup> HNP C/1/1. Above, Landownership.

<sup>352</sup> *Reg. Wetherall*, 452.

<sup>353</sup> J. Caley & J. Hunter, *Valor Ecclesiasticus tempore Henerici VIII auctorite regia institutus*, Record Commission (London 1810–34), v, copy in CAC; Hutchinson, I 197–8

<sup>354</sup> Knowles, *Religious Orders in England, III The Tudor Age* (Cambridge, 1961), 268–90.

It appears that most of the parish clergy of the diocese stood aloof from the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536 and no doubt Chydren or his immediate successor (if there was one) did not get involved, despite the proximity of the rebels in Penrith and their gatherings on Broadfield just south of Wreay near Carlisle.<sup>355</sup> The priory was dissolved in 1537 but whether Chydren continued as vicar is not known. He may well have done so if he adjusted to the new order. Thomas Rumney who died in 1565, is the next known vicar.<sup>356</sup>

As noted above, in 1549, the rectory and the advowson were separated from the manor or estate of the priory, which became known as the Manor of Ermathwaite, and could be traded as a separate entity (cf. Landownership). The owner of the advowson had a right to the great tithes (wood, corn, grain, hay) of the parish, a valuable if contentious source of income.<sup>357</sup>

On the death of Thomas Rumney in 1565, John Pre(e)stman (Prestman/Prestman) was said to be presented by Robert Dalston in the right of his wife.<sup>358</sup> It is not known who Dalton's wife was, or indeed who he was, but she could have been a daughter of Leonard Barrow, for, in 1594, on the death of Prestman (then described as perpetual vicar), Henry Barrow and Hugh Lowther (or probably Lowthian), presented Robert Watson, thus showing that the

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<sup>355</sup> *VCH Cumb.*, II, 50–53; Bouch, *Prelates and People of the Lake District* 181–88; See also S. M. Harrison, *The Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties, 1536–7* (RHS, London, 1981) and G. Moorhouse, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: The Rebellion That Shook Henry VIII's Throne* (London, 2002).

<sup>356</sup> For an eye witness account at the parish level of the period leading up to and after the break with Rome, see E. Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath, Reformation and Rebellion in an English Village* (London, 2002).

<sup>357</sup> For examples of how tithes were acquired see C.B. Phillips (ed), *Lowther Family Estate Books 1617–1675* (Surtees Society, CXCI, 1979).

<sup>358</sup> N&B, II, 432; CCed; CAS (C), DRC 1/3, Episcopal Register.

advowson was still with the Barrows.<sup>359</sup> Henry Barrow was the son and heir of Robert Barrow(e) who died c.1592. When he was a minor, his mother Elizabeth, represented him at an inquisition after the death of his father, included in the inquisition was the right to the advowson of the vicarage of Ainstable and tithes of corn in Ainstable, Ruckcroft and Dale.<sup>360</sup> He may have been still a minor in 1594 and Hugh Lothian/Lowther his guardian. John Preestman was an industrious scribe to his flock, appearing as a witness to and probable writer of some 21 wills between 1572 and 1594, for which he would have charged a fee.<sup>361</sup>

The next vicar, Robert Watson, was a witness to at least two wills and his own is dated 29 April 1616. He left a sizeable inheritance and dependant family of his widowed mother and wife with three underage children.<sup>362</sup> Watson was succeeded as vicar by John Wilson on presentation by Henry Barrow of Alnwick in 1616, most probably the same Henry Barrow, son of Robert Barrow, mentioned above. John Wilson witnessed the will of John Thompson of Ruckcroft, which he probably wrote and was a supervisor of the will of John Hoggart of Ainstable dated 6 March 1620. In the will of John Pearson of Ainstable, dated 16 January 1633, Wilson is also a supervisor and described as ‘my maister’, inferring that Pearson was a

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<sup>359</sup> N&B give Hugh Lowthian, CCEd give Lowther. Lowthian is probably correct as Lowthians had been at nearby Staffield since 1568. In 1687 Bridget Barrow married George Lowthian of Staffield and made a presentation to the vicarage: TNA, C 43/6/13. Robert Dalston may have been a member of the Dalston family who were prominent in the late 15th and early 16th cent. See F. Haswell, ‘The Dalston Family’, *CW2*, x (1910), 201–68.

<sup>360</sup> TNA, C 43/14/1, Parties Henry Barrows, a minor, and Elizabeth Barrows his mother: ‘Traverse of an inquisition taken on the death of Robert Barrow, father of the said Henry. Places mentioned: Amstable, advowson of vicarage; Ainstable, Ruckcroft and Diall, tithes of corn etc, County Cumbr. Date: 35 Eliz I (Nov 1592–Nov 1593).

<sup>361</sup> CAS (C), PROB list the wills of the Carlisle Consistory Court. Preestman is named as a witness in a contested will in the Diocesan Court of the Archbishop of York in 1570-71: <https://www.dhi.ac.uk/causepapers/causepaper.jsp?id=115897> (accessed 1 February 2023).

<sup>362</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1616/WIN VX/225.

servant of the vicar. Wilson rented a tenement called Iveson's Tenement from Lord William Howard in Cumwhitton, paying 31s. 1d. rent at Easter in April 1634 and in June he paid 40s. for a year's rent that had been due at Easter. On 25 March 1641, he paid 40s. for a year's rent that had been due 'Easter last.'<sup>363</sup> He appears as 'minister' in the Protestation Return for 1642, where Leonard Barrow, Gent., and George Greame, Gent., top the list of 83 males.<sup>364</sup> John Wilson died in 1649 and was buried at Kirkoswald.<sup>365</sup>

### Interregnum

There is no diocesan record of a vicar at Ainstable from the death of John Wilson and the institution of George Dacre in 1661, a gap of 12 years that coincided with the Interregnum, but see below. Although 31 incumbents in the deaneries of Cumberland Westmorland were ejected during this period, the vicar of Ainstable, if there was one, was not one of those listed.<sup>366</sup> By 1653, there was a local association of Presbyterian ministers including those of Greystoke, Penrith, Eden Hall, Skelton, Hutton and Addington but none is recorded for Ainstable.<sup>367</sup>

It is during this period that one John Watson, described as the vicar of Ainstable in the action, in 1655, brought a case against members of the Barrow family for converting for their own

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<sup>363</sup> William Howard & George Ornsby, *Selections from the Household books of Lord William Howard of Naworth Castle with an Appendix* (Surtees Society, LXVIII), 279, 362

<sup>364</sup> Parliamentary Archives, HL/PO/JO/10/1/82/100

<sup>365</sup> CCED; Nightingale, *Ejected*, I, 402–03.

<sup>366</sup> Includes the deaneries of Kendal and Coupland which were in the diocese of Chester. For list of the ejected see Nightingale.

<sup>367</sup> Bouch and Jones, *The Lake Counties 1500-1830: A Social and Economic History*, Manchester (1961), 176–7.

use land and timber which rightly belonged to the vicar.<sup>368</sup> In his submission to the court, Watson claimed he was presented to the vicarage in 1649, it being vacant by the death of Wilson, by John Barrow. He may well nominally have been the vicar, as parishioners could choose their own minister, or the patron could continue to present under the new regime. It is possible that following the death of John Wilson and the lack of a diocesan-approved successor, the Barrows, as patrons, appropriated the glebe for their own use.

### *1660-1820*

It is not known what happened to John Watson whether he died in office or moved on, but the next recorded presentation to the vicarage (described as ‘lawfully vacant’), is that of George Dacre by Leonard Barrow, in 1661.<sup>369</sup> George Yates briefly appears as vicar of Ainstable in 1661, without a presentation, before becoming curate at Croglin in 1664. He was collated there as rector in the same year by the bishop of Carlisle.<sup>370</sup> George Dacre was witness to the will of Robert Hewetson of Ruckcroft in 1664, he was buried in the churchyard in 1679.<sup>371</sup> Dacre was succeeded by George Hodgson on presentation by Barbara Haggett, widow, in February 1681.<sup>372</sup> She had been the wife of Leonard Barrow and on his death as executrix of his will took possession of his estate which included the advowson. Leonard’s younger brother, William, was underage when Leonard died and through his mother Jane Barrow,

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<sup>368</sup> TNA, C 5/380/154.

<sup>369</sup> A John Watson appears in the diocesan records for the period 1660-1687 and he appears as schoolmaster at Dufton, Westward and Wigton .

<sup>370</sup> N&B, II, 434; Nightingale, *Ejected*, I, 403–04; CCEd, Croglin, suggests he was P.C. which could be Parish Chaplain, at Ainstable in 1661

<sup>371</sup> *Ibid.* CCEd gives Hodgson’s institution as ‘on the death of George Dacre’ but the Vicarage could have been vacant since the death of Dacre in 1679.

<sup>372</sup> CCEd.

widow of John Barrow, brought a case in Chancery to enforce a trust deed of 16 October 1628 by which the estate was to descend to progeny of the marriage of John Barrow (male entail) to Jane Simpson.<sup>373</sup> In the meantime, Barbara had married William Haggett in 1673 and in 1678 brought a case in Chancery for herself and her two Barrow daughters claiming that William Barrow had dispossessed her.<sup>374</sup> She must have succeeded as her daughter, Bridget, who married George Lowthian of Stafffield Hall, presented the next vicar on the death of George Hodgson in 1737, through Bridget the advowson passed to the Lowthians.

George Hodgson, who was also curate/reader at Armathwaite chapel from 1681 to 1704, was described by Bishop Nicolson as ‘that rascally curate’ and turned out to be a very unsatisfactory shepherd of his flock.<sup>375</sup> On a visitation to the parish, in October 1703, the bishop found much to complain about; books given to the church by Barnabas Oley, were in an ‘abused’ condition and he had lent out three, one to Mr Aglionby of Nunnery, one to Mr Hunter of Croglin, and one to the master-builder of the new bridge at Armathwaite. Hodgson, in 1706, drew up a ‘true terrier of the lands belonging to the vicarage of Ainstable’ and also recorded that ‘Madam Aglionby of Nunnery hath burrowed the whole *Duty of Man* belonging to the present vicar George Hodgson,’ but recorded later ‘the same restored again’. Also, Mr George Lowthian of Stafford, the patron, ‘did borrow Bishop’s Usher’s *Book of Divinity*.’<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> As n.25, above.

<sup>374</sup> TNA, C 6/238/46

<sup>375</sup> CCEd, Armathwaite, Hodgson is listed as curate (licensing) at Armathwaite in 1682, and as Lecturer in 1704, his last year, in the other years he is listed as Reader: *Diocese Of Carlisle*; Nightingale, *Ejected*, I, 404. The benefice of Armathwaite was held in plurality with Ainstable.

<sup>376</sup> *Transcripts of Register of Ainstable 1664–1757*, August 1889, Carlisle Library, Jackson Collection, B435.

Nicolson goes on to describe Hodgson as very careless of keeping of the parish register and remarked that ‘admonitions would not reclaim him and some other method must be taken’.<sup>377</sup> Other means were found as he was summoned to the Consistory Court in February 1723 and suspended for failing to act on the alleged fornication of John Smith with Maria Young.<sup>378</sup> The churchwardens, Isaac Thompson and William Moorhouse, complained in 1727 that their church was ‘very irregularly served having only one sermon in a month and prayers being read by Mr Hodgson’s son who is not in any orders.’<sup>379</sup> Hodgson was in more trouble in 1728-9 when he married Pelham Bell and Anna Stockdale without publication of banns, with the event described to the court as a ‘clandestine’ marriage.<sup>380</sup> In 1732 it was found there was no carpet or hearse cloth in the hearse and in 1733 the churchwardens complained that the vicar had demolished part of the vicarage house and outbuildings; they complained again in 1734.<sup>381</sup> William Leake was licensed as curate, in May 1729, ‘during the suspension of the present vicar’, and continued as curate at Ainstable until June 1736, when George Hodgson was ‘excused’, he died in December the next year.<sup>382</sup> In November 1735, in the Consistory

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<sup>377</sup> Nicolson, *Misc. Accounts*. Barnabas Oley in 1685, granted money to 10 poor parishes in the diocese of Carlisle in order they could buy a set of 16 books of divinity to be placed in the vicarage. The books and the 10 parishes are listed on pages 7–8.

<sup>378</sup> CAS (C), DRC/3/9.

<sup>379</sup> CAS (C), H J Shrewsbury, *Ainstable Bishops’ Transcripts*, (1990).

<sup>380</sup> CAS (C), DRC/3/9. For detailed background of marriages in the period 1550–1700 see David Cressy, *Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England*. Oxford 1997; for clandestine marriages see Ch. 14, pp. 316–35. Also Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800*, 1977, London, Ch. 1.

<sup>381</sup> CAS (C), DRC/5/6.

<sup>382</sup> CCed; William Lee(a)ke was the father of John Leake who was born in Ainstable and attended Croglin school. He became a ‘man-midwife’ and went onto become a famous physician in London, ODNB.



Court, William Leake sought sequestration of the vicarage of Ainstable against one Lancelot Bird but the case was dismissed as a Mr Smyth undertook to pay the costs.<sup>383</sup>

As noted above, the advowson passed to the Lowthians and in 1737 John Verty, who performed the burial service for Hodgson, was presented by Bridget Lowthian.<sup>384</sup> George Lowthian appears in the lists of Recusants for 1723–4 and the return for his estates say he had let the corn tithes of Ainstable to Thomas Dawson and James Rumney for £71 10s. per annum.<sup>385</sup> Verty had been curate at Mungrisdale Chapel, Greystoke in 1736, and went to Ainstable as treasurer, in July 1737, before becoming vicar.<sup>386</sup> It appears he left, in March 1749, to become Rector of Whitfield, Northumberland.<sup>387</sup> Chancellor Waugh, in his hand written notes added to Nicholson's *Miscellany*, said that 'Verty was never in the church (but *see* above) and kept a curate there with the leave of bishop Fleming (1735–47) as companion to Mr Lazonby (*see* below), the value of the vicarage by the commission at £35 but nearer £40.'<sup>388</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> The details of this case are unknown but in the same period (1720–40), a Lancelot Bird is named in two cases recorded in the Howard of Naworth Papers: first, with Isaac Fisher he set up a mill to the detriment of the mills of Cumwhitton and Cumrew: CAS (C), DHN/C/170/46); second, he purchased a customary tenement of Stephen Hodgson: DHN/C/63/2, copy of Bill in Chancery. It is probable that Bird had taken possession of the 'out of repair' vicarage house.

<sup>384</sup> CCEd; N&B, II, 432; R. Huddleston, 'Cumberland Recusants of 1723–24,' *CW2*, lix (1959), 125; Brockington, Richard, 'Staffield', final draft for *VCH Cumbria*, accessed Aug 2018: Denton, *Perambulation*, 325; Daniel Lysons and Samuel Lysons, 'Parishes: Addingham–Aspatria', in *Magna Britannia: Volume 4, Cumberland* (London, 1816), pp. 4–18: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/magna-britannia/vol4/pp4-18> (accessed 30 Aug. 2018).

<sup>385</sup> Huddleston, 'Cumberland Recusants 1723–4,' *CW2*, lix (1959), 125.

<sup>386</sup> CCEd.

<sup>387</sup> CCEd. The date of his departure is entered as 'cession' in the database. Whitfield is in the Allen Valley 16 km SW of Hexham. The parish church of Holy Trinity was rebuilt in 1785, the living in 1868 was £300.

<sup>388</sup> Nicolson, *Miscellany Accounts*, 'Ainstable', hand written notes added by Chancellor

William Leake (above) is the first recorded curate at Ainstable. He was probably appointed because of the feckless vicar, George Hodgson, but he did not become vicar when Hodgson died. The next curate appointed to Ainstable was Benjamin Lazonby, in April 1742. He had been curate at Wetheral until replaced by Mr Gilbank, leaving Lazonby quite destitute with a large family.<sup>389</sup> Ten years later, in July 1752, he was appointed curate for Ireby, combining that duty with that of schoolmaster.<sup>390</sup> Lazonby's time at Ainstable over-lapped that of Charles Smallwood who was presented to the vicarage in June 1749, by Richard Lowthian of Dumfries.<sup>391</sup> In contrast to John Verty, who had to give up his living of Ainstable when appointed to Whitfield, Smallwood continued to enjoy his position at Ainstable when he was appointed Rector of Kirkoswald under the patronage of the Crown in October 1761.<sup>392</sup> To help Smallwood who might have been an absentee vicar following his appointment to Kirkoswald, Thomas Railton was appointed assistant curate in August 1762, and he became vicar on the death of Smallwood in April 1771, on presentation by Richard Lowthian.<sup>393</sup> Richard Lowthian had a seat in the chancel, as did Mr Aglionby of Nunnery.<sup>394</sup> In his will of December 1781, Thomas Railton left to his eldest son John, £100, to his younger son Thomas, £90 and £90 to each of his four daughters.<sup>395</sup> He appointed John Orfeur Yates of

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Waugh.

<sup>389</sup> Bouch, *Prelates and People of the Lake District*, 360n.

<sup>390</sup> CCEd; CAC, *Ainstable Bishops' Transcripts*, H J Shrewsbury (1990)

<sup>391</sup> He must be the son of George Lowthian who was ordained deacon and priest on 8 March 1723: Huddleston, 'Cumberland Recusants', 125, although he not referred to as such in any documents seen.

<sup>392</sup> CCEd. He was thus holding Ainstable and Kirkoswald in plurality.

<sup>393</sup> CCEd.

<sup>394</sup> N&B, II, 432. See below for more on the dispute over the maintenance of the chancel.

<sup>395</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1782/W139.

Skirwith Abbey, Christopher Aglionby of Nunnery and William Melbourne of Armathwaite Castle as trustees with the remaining legacies to and as sole executor his wife Jane.<sup>396</sup>

The advowson continued in the ownership of the Lowthians. Following the death of Thomas Railton at the age of 66 years on 30 December 1781, Richard Lowthian presented William Armstrong in July 1782.<sup>397</sup> Armstrong was assisted as curate by Thomas Pearson, who had been appointed in January 1782. John Busby was appointed assistant curate in September 1786 and, in December 1791, the vicar, William Armstrong, appointed another curate, Henry Hogarth, who held the post until 1808. Armstrong died in 1797 and Richard Lowthian presented William Smith to the vicarage.<sup>398</sup>

### **1820 to Present**

The Inclosure Award for Ainstable, made on 7 May 1821, recorded that the vicar was William Smith and Richard Lowthian Ross was patron. As vicar, Smith was entitled 'to the tithe of hay of divers lands within the said parish and also to the tithes of wool and lamb turnips potatoes and other green crops and likewise to the tithe of agistment and to all other vicarial small and mixed tithes arising as well from and out of the ancient lands tenements and hereditaments within the said parish of Ainstable.' The Award exonerated these tithes, except Easter offerings, mortuaries and surplice fees, and compensated the vicarage with lands

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<sup>396</sup> Christopher Aglionby was the last in the male line and died unmarried in 1785 and the Nunnery estate passed to his youngest sister Mary who married John Orfeur Yates of Skirwith Abbey. Their son Francis Yates changed his name to Aglionby in order to inherit Nunnery.

<sup>397</sup> Headstone in the churchyard: Godwin, Jeremy, *The Memorial Descriptions of Ainstable, Armathwaite, Croglin and Cumrew* (Cumbria Family History Society, 2001), 12.

<sup>398</sup> CCEd.

enclosed from the commons.<sup>399</sup> Richard Lowthian Ross was entitled to tithes of grain and corn throughout the parish.

Elizabeth Bamber, eldest daughter of Henry Aglionby and Anne Musgrave of Nunnery, and the widow of Richard Bamber and heir of Charles Aglionby (d.1785) held the manor of Ermathwaite.<sup>400</sup> As such she was in dispute with William Smith the vicar about maintenance of the chancel which was unresolved at the date of the Award. She died on 5 January 1822.<sup>401</sup>

The Revd Smith was involved in two court cases during his time as vicar. He was called as a prosecution witness at Carlisle Assize in 1820 when one James Pickup was charged with 'putting the Revd Smith out of his church and assaulting him.' Pickup made a reverse allegation of assault against the vicar. The argument was over a difference of opinion concerning new paving in the chancel and became violent when the vicar remonstrated with Pickup who, the vicar alleged, was not following his, the vicar's wishes. There was a struggle and Pickup pushed the vicar out through the church door, another man called Morland became involved. The court also heard that the vicar was in dispute with parishioners over the payment of tithes, which was affecting their relationship. Pickup and Morland were found not guilty and the case against Revd Smith was abandoned.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> CAS (C), QRE/1/28.

<sup>400</sup> Above, Landownership.

<sup>401</sup> CAS (C), QRE/1/28. Cf. Church Architecture.

<sup>402</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 26 Aug. 1820.

In the second case, at the Cumberland Summer Assize, reported on 12 September 1829, Richard Lowthian Ross as Rector took out a case against Revd Smith as vicar over ‘great tithes’ which he claimed were due to him arising out of a plot of land allotted to the vicar in the Inclosure Award of 1820. The circumstance of the case were peculiar to the agreement in the Inclosure Award and involved complicated points of law but was found in favour of Ross who gained tithes of £9.<sup>403</sup>

A third case

against the executors of Revd Smith, who had died on 28 May 1832, was brought on 23 February 1833, by Revd J. Bird, Smith’s successor as vicar. Revd Bird as plaintiff sought recovery of damages for dilapidations to the parsonage house and for lack of repairs to fences & gates of glebe lands and allotments & exhaustion of land. The defendants pleaded guilty to the first indictment, neglect of the parsonage, but not guilty to the other three indictments of lack of maintenance of the fences and gates of the glebe land and allotment. The jury found for the plaintiff, £78 4s. for the house and glebe and £100 for fences and gates.<sup>404</sup>

In 1830 Richard Lowthian Ross took out a mortgage on the advowson and tithes with William Dobinson of Carlisle and others, but requested to reserve the right of the next presentation seemingly in anticipation of Smith soon dying.<sup>405</sup> Smith left £800 in his will of May 1831, on trust to Thomas Kirkbride of Hesketh for the education of his two

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<sup>403</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 12 Sept. 1829.

<sup>404</sup> *Carlisle Journal*, 23 Feb. 1833. The case considered arguments concerning exhaustion of land through over-use, among other matters of neglect.

<sup>405</sup> CAS (C), DX/1134/24: Dobinson has also been transcribed as Robinson but Dobinson is correct.

grandchildren, Isaac Smith and Mary Kirkbride, until they were 21, and the residue of his estate to his daughter, Jane Relph.<sup>406</sup> In July 1832, on the death of Smith, Dobinson was assigned by Ross to present John Bird to the vicarage.<sup>407</sup> In 1837–8, the mortgagees put the advowson and tithes up for auction and they were acquired by Francis Aglionby of Nunnery who by then had acquired Stafffield Hall.<sup>408</sup> The Aglionbys had been in possession of Nunnery which comprised the site and lands of the priory from 1696.<sup>409</sup>

As mentioned above, the maintenance of the chancel was contentious. In 1817, the church had been rebuilt, but the chancel was still in a ‘shocking and disgraceful state’.<sup>410</sup> Mrs Elizabeth Bamber, as owner of the former priory manor of Ermathwaite, Richard Lowthian Ross as patron, and the vicar, disputed the traditional division of responsibilities for the chancel equally between the estate of Nunnery, as successors of the priory, and the vicar, with the impropiator being absolved from any responsibility.<sup>411</sup> Mrs Bamber claimed that the Nunnery estate had never paid tithes as the priory enjoyed the income from the tithes of the whole parish. Eventually the argument was settled by Mrs Bamber and Richard Lowthian Ross agreeing to contribute half each.<sup>412</sup> After the death of Mrs Bamber in 1822, the Nunnery

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<sup>406</sup> CAS (C), PRO/1832/W407.

<sup>407</sup> CCEd; CAS (C), DX1134/24.

<sup>408</sup> *Carlisle Patriot*, 28 July 1838; H Summerson, *An Ancient Squires Family*.

<sup>409</sup> Cf. The Priory.

<sup>410</sup> *Diocese of Carlisle*, 203. Fletcher had visited the parish in 1814.

<sup>411</sup> *Ibid.* Tithes were a tax intended to sustain priests, maintain church buildings and provide alms for the poor. The responsibilities for maintaining the chancel, and the church, were founded in customs from before the Reformation and disputes were common before and after the Dissolution for churches that had been appropriated to a religious institution. After the Reformation very often the ‘great’ or ‘rectorial’ tithes became a trading commodity leading to further disputes over the maintenance of churches. See Dodds, Ben, ‘Managing Tithes on the Late Middle Ages,’ *Ag. Hist. Rev.*, 53, ii, 125–40.

<sup>412</sup> For Aglionbys see T. H. B., Graham, ‘Nunnery’, *CW2*, xvii (1917), 2–15; H.

estate passed to her younger sister, Mary, who married John Yates of Skirwith Abbey.<sup>413</sup> With the failure of the Aglionby male line, their son, Francis, inherited by agreeing to change his name to Aglionby in accordance with the will of Elizabeth Bamber. In 1847, his daughter, Jane (d. 1874), married Christopher Featherstonhuagh who had acquired Staffield Hall.<sup>414</sup> Christopher Featherstonhaugh, presumably acting in the right of his wife, took on the mantle of patron and in 1850 presented Albert M. Wilson.<sup>415</sup> Revd Wilson was involved in the discussions which led to the rebuilding of the church, but it was his successor, John Francis Morton who with Christopher Featherstonhaugh, obtained a faculty for the rebuilding of the church in 1871.<sup>416</sup> Charles Aglionby of Virginia contributed £200 towards the cost.<sup>417</sup>

By the time the next vicar, Lewis Morgan, was presented in 1887, the right of presentation had passed to a new line of Aglionbys in the person of Arthur Aglionby, who as Arthur Cooper had married in 1871, Elizabeth, daughter of Christopher Featherstonhaugh. She died in 1885 and Arthur Cooper then assumed the name of Aglionby.<sup>418</sup> He bought Nunnery from his relative, Revd Francis Keyes Aglionby, a descendant of John Orfuer Yates and Mary Aglionby.<sup>419</sup> Lewis remained vicar until 1898, when Lionel Marshall Wilford was presented by Arthur Aglionby. Wilford, together with his mother, had a memorial erected in the church

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Summerson, *An Ancient Squire's Family: The History of the Aglionbys c. 1130–2002* (Carlisle, 2007).

<sup>413</sup> CAS (C), PROB/1822/WCOD33.

<sup>414</sup> CAS (C), DBS/4/3/14, Draft marriage settlement between Jane Aglionby and Charles Featherstonhaugh, 1847.

<sup>415</sup> CAS (C), DX/923; PR/96/10.

<sup>416</sup> CAS (C), PR/96/15/-20; cf. *The Church*.

<sup>417</sup> Summerson, *Medieval Carlisle*, 168.

<sup>418</sup> Graham, 'Nunnery', Chart C.

<sup>419</sup> *Ibid.*; the notice of sale on 15 Sept. 1892, in four lots, is in CAS (C), DBS/6/1/19.

to his brother, Rowland Marshall Wilford, who had served in the Boer War 1899-1903 and died in Poona, India, on 18 September 1903, at the age of 28.<sup>420</sup> The Revd Wilford was responsible for managing the erection of the Institute and Sunday school Room. He died in July 1914, and is buried in the churchyard at the east end of the chancel.

Hubert Francis Tilbury was offered the living of Ainstable by Captain Aglionby and became vicar in August 1914. He had been vicar at Orton, Westmorland, since 1912, and previous to that had been at Whitley Bay.<sup>421</sup> Tilbury appears to have been a conscientious and busy incumbent, if absent for a time while serving as a temporary chaplain to the Forces from 2 July 1916 until the end of the First World War.<sup>422</sup> He hosted a Treat for the children of Ainstable School on 29 June 1915.<sup>423</sup> He served in France writing to his parishioners of his experiences at the front in September 1916. He returned home on leave for one month in July 1917, having been in a hospital for officers in London and relinquished his commission on the 12 July. However, he must have continued to serve, as in February 1918, he had written, it is assumed from somewhere in France, to a Mrs Lightfoot of Brougham Street, Penrith, on the death of her son, William, who had been killed by a sniper 'last Tuesday.'<sup>424</sup> On 16

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<sup>420</sup> His memorial is included in the War Memorials Register held by the Imperial War Museum.

<sup>421</sup> CAS (C), PR/98/14.

<sup>422</sup> *London Gaz.*, supplement, issue 29699, 9 Aug. 1916.

<sup>423</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 12 Jan. 1915.

<sup>424</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 29 Jun. 1915; 5 Sept. 1916; 17 July 1917; 26 Feb. 1918. For a study of the role of chaplains in WWI see Alison M Brown, 'Army Chaplains in the First World War', unpublished PhD Thesis, St Andrews University 1996: <http://hdl.handle.net/10023/2771> (accessed 7 July 2024).



October 1918, he was appointed an Honorary Chaplin to the Forces.<sup>425</sup> In September 1916, he wrote a letter to the parishioners telling them about his experiences in France.<sup>426</sup>

In August 1921, Revd Tilbury advertised in the *Army and Navy Gazette* and *The Scotsman* offering to ‘prepare boys’ for entrance to Public Schools, with ‘home life and special care for delicate and backward boys,’ he continued to do so advertise regularly until he left Ainstable for the living of Pillerton in Warwickshire.<sup>427</sup> On 25 April 1924, Tilbury obtained a faculty to build a new lynch gate as a war memorial but it was not until June 1934 he returned to Ainstable to dedicate the lych-gate saying he felt he had to see the project through, having begun the proposal in 1924.<sup>428</sup>

In November 1920, Arthur Charles Aglionby sold the advowson to Thomas Backhouse Ecroyd and he, his son, W. E. B. Ecroyd, and grandson, Charles Ecroyd, continued as patrons of the living.

On the resignation of Revd Tilbury, Revd Edgar Bell was instituted to Ainstable, was held in plurality with Armathwaite, with W E B Ecroyd as patron of both livings.<sup>429</sup> He was succeeded in 1939 by Revd W. N. C. Murray, who was also appointed to Armathwaite.<sup>430</sup> He was there until 1944, when Revd J. A. Craig was appointed, serving until 1947. He was

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<sup>425</sup> *London Gazette (Supplement)*, 6 Sept. 1917, issue 9249 and 29 Nov. 1918, issue 14061.

<sup>426</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 5 Sept. 1916.

<sup>427</sup> *The Scotsman*, 2 Dec. 1921.

<sup>428</sup> CAS (C), PR/96/15–20; *Penrith Observer*, 12 Jun. 1934; cf. Monuments.

<sup>429</sup> CDC1939. It is not recorded for every appointment of a vicar that the living was held in plurality but it does seem to have been.

<sup>430</sup> CAS (C), DRC 54/3. CDC 1941

followed by Revd K. Harper. On 19 October 1954, the benefices of Ainstable and Armathwaite were joined, with the then incumbent of Ainstable, Revd Alan Gardner Livesley, as the first incumbent of the joint benefice. He served until 1957.<sup>431</sup> Livesley was succeeded by Revd R. B. Bradford, whose successor, Revd D. R. Grant, appointed in 1963, served until 1968. The last vicar of the joint benefice was Revd P. F. W. Frost, from 1969 to 1974.<sup>432</sup>

On 1 April 1976, the benefice of Ainstable with Armathwaite was dissolved and a new benefice of Kirkoswald, Renwick, Ainstable, Hesket-in-the-Forest and Armathwaite was created with Revd J. M. Allen as the new incumbent.<sup>433</sup> When Revd Allen resigned in May 1983, Revd G. Thomson was appointed to succeed him. At the time, the bishop of Carlisle was recorded as patron of the living of Ainstable with 'and Ecroyd' added in pencil on the printed certificate. Revd Thomson served until 1986, and his successor Revd G. F. Wedgewood, stayed only for a year, 1987-1988. Revd D. M. Fowler was recorded as vicar in 1994.<sup>434</sup>

From 1994 the parish of Ainstable was joined with Armathwaite, Calthwaite, Hesket, Hutton-in-the-Forest, Ivegill and Skelton in a Team Ministry. In 1999 Revd Beth Smith was Priest in

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<sup>431</sup> CAS (C), DRC 54/3.

<sup>432</sup> *Crockford's Year Book*; cf 'History of the Church'.

<sup>433</sup> *Crockford's Year Book*; cf 'History of the Church'.

<sup>434</sup> *Crockford's 1993-94*; CAS (C), PR96/118. Benefices (Exercise of Rights of Presentation Measure 1931), Section 1, was applied when Revd J. M. Allen resigned. On the printed certificate 'and Ecroyd' is added in handwriting. The 1931 legislation was replaced by the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

Charge.<sup>435</sup> In 2018 the group became the Inglewood of Churches. with Revd Philip Dorling as Priest in Charge. He resigned in 2019 and the benefice remained vacate until Revd Mark Houston was appointed as Team Vicar in February 2021. In April 2022, Ivegill left the Group and the parish of Plumpton Wall joined.<sup>436</sup>

In 2023 services at Ainstable were down to Holy Communion once a month, the other churches in the Group held at least two services a month.

## **Non-Conformity**

### *Wesleyan Methodists*

Early Methodists in Ainstable are possibly an early Wesleyan society that met at Ruckcroft but which did not make any returns between 1840 and 1914.<sup>437</sup> Later, a more active group of Methodists in the township is confirmed when they purchased, on 8 May 1860, a plot of land at Row, Ainstable, for the erection of a chapel.<sup>438</sup> The deed was signed by 17 new trustees and Revd George Greenwood, Superintendent Minister of the Penrith Circuit, Ainstable, then being within the Penrith Circuit.<sup>439</sup> Of the 17 trustees, only John Pearson of Harras, a farmer, lived in Ainstable. Two trustees, John Hewetson, another farmer, and William Hewetson,

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<sup>435</sup> CAS (C), PR96/104–115.

<sup>436</sup> *Personal communication Rev Mark Houston.*

<sup>437</sup> Burgess, John, 'Methodism in Cumbria', unpublished PhD Thesis, Durham University, 1979, vol 2 p. 453.

<sup>438</sup> Deputy Keeper of Public Records Report, v.32, pt 2, 1871, No. 1; *Calendar of Trust Deeds Relating to Charities*, Row, p. 783.

<sup>439</sup> *Ainstable Methodist Church Anniversary Brochure 1861–1986*, author unknown, Carlisle Local Studies, 1A 287. Typed with yellow cover, 2 pages size A4 folded and stitched to form 4 pages at A5. Acknowledges abstracts from a reports in the *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*. Methodists held meetings in each other's houses if there was no chapel.

yeoman, came from Knott in Cumwhitton, which is approximately 300 m. from North Gill, the boundary between the two parishes; its occupiers were very often associated with events in Ainstable. Of the other trustees, six were yeomen from surrounding villages and three including two drapers, were from Penrith. On 31 May 1861, the chapel was opened for a cost of £372. There was seating for 150 and a building for a Sunday Schoolroom and vestry was built on the west side. On 28 November 1881, the Registrar at Penrith issued a certificate for the chapel to be a place of public worship and on 20 November 1881, issued a certificate for the Registration of Marriages. In April 1887, extra land was purchased from Mr Dixon Longrigg to enable the Schoolroom to be enlarged and a stable built for the minister's horse. Membership rose from 17 in 1851 to 31 in 1861. It hovered between 26 and 34 over the next few decades. After falling to 19 in 1901, it had recovered to 33 by 1911.<sup>440</sup>

In 1861 the vicar of Ainstable, Revd R. M. Wilson, in an advertisement for letting of three plots of land (presumably glebe), warned 'Will not be let to Wesleyan Methodist or Protestant Dissenter of any description.'<sup>441</sup> What was behind this wording is not known, but the number of Methodists in the parish was increasing at this time, perhaps due in part to disagreements with the vicar. The members supported the Wesleyan Missionary Society and further indication of the strength of Methodism in the Kirkoswald Circuit and surrounding area is shown by the demonstrations of the Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Union at Langwathby, in July 1889, when 700 adults and children are reported as attending.<sup>442</sup>

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<sup>440</sup> Burgess, 'Methodism', vol 2, p. 482.

<sup>441</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 5 Nov. 1961.

<sup>442</sup> *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*, 6 Jul. 1889.

On 7 May 1911, the Jubilee of the founding of the chapel, a festival was held to celebrate and commemorate the founders. Periodically Special General meetings of the trustees were held to appoint new trustees sometimes with a considerable gap in years; at the meeting held on 2 July 1931, with the Reverend Mark Hall Earl, Superintendent Minister, in the chair, it was recorded that 14 trustees had died, three wished to retire and one had ‘remained’ out of the kingdom for more than 12 months. The five remaining trustees would continue and 18 new trustees were appointed of whom nine were farmers, five were women and one a gentleman.<sup>443</sup> By 1920 the Sunday School was ‘given up’ as there were no children but it was hoped it could be reopened.

At the meeting of 17 October 1962, it was reported that 13 trustees had died, two of the women wished to resign with eight prepared to continue and eleven new trustees were appointed.

In 1977 the chapel received a bequest from the wills of Mr William Stirzaker (d. 1961) and Grace his wife (d. 1977) and in 1987 the chapel was renovated and redecorated.<sup>444</sup> The chapel continued in use until 2021. In February 2022, the Kirkoswald and Alston Moor Methodist Circuit made a planning application for a change of use of the chapel to residential or commercial use but following objections by Ainstable Parish Council and restrictive conditions required by Cumbria County Council because of the location on a dangerous

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<sup>443</sup> CAS (C), DFCM/4/1/42, Ainstable Chapel, Minutes of the Trustees.

<sup>444</sup> *Ainstable Methodist Church Anniversary Brochure 1861-1986; Ainstable Millennium Booklet* (2011).

corner in the road, the application was withdrawn.<sup>445</sup> In January 2023, the chapel was offered for sale and subsequently sold at auction.<sup>446</sup>

### *Primitive Methodists*

Primitive Methodists were established in Armathwaite when Henry Bulman (d. 1916) came to provide provisions to the navvies working on the Settle to Carlisle railway. Meetings were held in his house in Armathwaite. Later, Henry Bulman persuaded the earl of Carlisle to sell a parcel of land for a small chapel at Coal Bank on the corner of the road from Armathwaite to Ainstable and the road to Kirkoswald, past Coombs Wood. Although the chapel was within the parish of Ainstable, it was known as the Armathwaite Methodist Chapel.<sup>447</sup> The chapel was opened on 26 November 1876, and a Sunday School was added in 1889. There were sittings for 120 in 1940, but these had reduced to 100 by 1980. In 1898 the chapel is listed as being of the United Methodist Free Church, one of nine chapels of that church in the Carlisle Circuit.<sup>448</sup> It is quite probable that some inhabitants of Ainstable attended the chapel either consistently or occasionally. The chapel was closed for worship in 2008 and sold; planning permission to convert the chapel to a dwelling house was granted in October 2009.<sup>449</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> EDC, Planning Application No. 22/0129.

<sup>446</sup> 'For sale' notice, 1 Feb. 2023; [auctionhouse.co.uk](https://www.auctionhouse.co.uk) (accessed 1 Feb. 2023).

<sup>447</sup> Burgess, 'Methodism', vol 2, 238 .The railway opened to freight in 1876. A Henry Bulman described as a grocer and provision merchant of Armathwaite in a three party conveyance for Denton Foot (previously Denton Mill), NY 572 624, with the earl of Carlisle, dated 9 May 1903: CAS (C), DHN/C/206/34. His will is CAS (C), PROB/19/16/W561, his residence given as Clint House, Armathwaite. The site of the chapel was previously known as Coalbank.

<sup>448</sup> [https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://dcx0k27cd6yp9.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Chapels-and-Preaching-Rooms-1898.pdf&hl=en\\_US](https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=https://dcx0k27cd6yp9.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Chapels-and-Preaching-Rooms-1898.pdf&hl=en_US)

<sup>449</sup> EDC Planning Application 9/0628.

## Church Architecture

The church, dedicated to St Michael and All Angels, stands on a hill in the north of the parish at an elevation of 148 m. OD. in a rectangular cemetery approximately 50 m. by 100 m., bounded by stone walls on the south and west. On the north side the wall extends westward to a kissing-gate whence the original field quick thorn hedge continues. The western limit of the graveyard as shown on the 1st edition 6-inch OS map is represented by a break in slope west of the last gravestones. By September 2018 the graveyard had been extended to the west and burials continued.

The position of the church on a rounded hill suggests it was built to serve a scattered community of hamlets and isolated farmsteads.<sup>450</sup> The elevated position makes it visible from the main areas of nearby settlement in the village from Towngate to Rowfoot, east along the road to Croglin, from north of Ruckcroft, from Coombs Wood, along the road towards the church and from higher ground on the west of the river Eden. Its position was noted by 'Borderer' writing in the *Carlisle Journal* in 1916, 'and I do not remember any parish church in the county—and I have seen most of them—which can compare with this for situation'. Borderer goes on to say 'it has an imposing tower 60 feet high.' An undated unwritten picture postcard taken from the corner where the Methodist chapel stands, shows that the church with the tower was a significant building in the landscape and even today without the tower is still dominant on the hill.<sup>451</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> Continuous mention of churches in ecclesiastical records does not start until the 12th century. For discussion on the origin of churches see: Richard Morris, *Churches in the Landscape* (London, 1989) and Anthea Jones, *A Thousand Years of the English Parish* (Morton-in-Marsh, 2000).

<sup>451</sup> CAS (C), DB/6/Files/405. There are three undated unwritten picture postcards with

The dedication to St Michael is common across England and Wales. Many churches with the dedication are in an elevated positions as is that at Ainstable and it has been suggested that the popularity of St Michael is connected with the battle of the early Christian church to replace pagan beliefs, in medieval art he is often portrayed fighting the Devil.<sup>452</sup> The possibility that the church at Ainstable sitting on its hill may occupy an earlier pagan site cannot be dismissed out of hand.<sup>453</sup> Another suggestion is that when the feast day for a saint was at an inconvenient date such as harvest, it was transferred to a ‘vacant’ time of the year such as Michaelmas, that is after harvest. Henry VIII decreed that all dedication feasts were to be kept at that time of year and over time many churches therefore gained Michael as dedicated saint.<sup>454</sup> However in Wales where dedications to St Michael are most frequent, they are also the most ancient and in Cumbria four are suggested as pre-Norman and seven, including Ainstable, as medieval.<sup>455</sup>

Nothing is known of the medieval building but it or a successor had two bells inscribed with the date 1668.<sup>456</sup> There is no record of the church or its goods in the two surveys ordered by Edward VI in 1548 and 1552 as Ainstable and other parishes is missing from the returns.<sup>457</sup>

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distant views of the church.

<sup>452</sup> David Hey, *The Oxford Companion to Local History and Family History* (Oxford, 1996), 90–1.

<sup>453</sup> Richard Morris, *Churches in the Landscape*, chap 2. See also R. Hutton, *The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles* (1991); cf. Settlement.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*; N&B, II, 386; T.H.B. Graham and W.G. Collingwood, ‘Patron Saints of the Diocese of Carlisle’, *CW2*, xxv (1925), 1–27.

<sup>455</sup> Rev Edmund Venables, ‘The Dedications of the Parochial Churches and Chapels of the Modern Diocese of Carlisle’, *CW1* (1884) 133; Graham and Collingwood, ‘Patron Saints’, 3.

<sup>456</sup> Rev H. Whitehead, ‘Church Bells in Leith Ward 1’, *CW1*, xiii (1888), 478.

<sup>457</sup> Rev H. Whitehead, ‘Church Goods in Cumberland in 1552’, *CW1*, viii (1886), 186–204.



The rectory and advowson of Ainstable were separated from the lands of the priory in 1553 when Edward VI granted the lands to William Greymen *alias* Carlile (Graham.) with the rectory remaining with the Barrows.<sup>458</sup> The separation lay the seeds to future disputes over the maintenance of the church, particularly the chancel. When Bishop William Nicolson visited on 29 October 1703, he recorded that the ‘Quire is miserably crowded on the north side.’ He also noted that repairs to the north were ‘obliged’ to the Nunnery estate, to the south to the vicar and that the patron Mr Lowthian had ‘no burden on him.’ He found the church ‘lightsome’ and books in good order but that the door in the south porch off its hinges and ‘at a distance.’ The register book started in 1611 and was imperfect and ‘very scandalous.’<sup>459</sup>

The present church, at least the third on the site, dates from a rebuild of 1871–2, but is without the tower, which was taken down in 1983 as being unsafe and replaced by the present porch and belfry with two bells.<sup>460</sup> The building, is briefly described by Pevsner as of red sandstone and slate roof, a four-bay nave and south transept and a two- bay chancel. He noted a column piscina in the chancel which he described as Norman but its presence does not mean it came from an earlier church on the site. Hyde revised this description to include the stained glass in the East and West windows and some of the monuments.<sup>461</sup>

### *Monuments*

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<sup>458</sup> *Cal. Pat. R, 1549–51*, 383.

<sup>459</sup> Nicholson’s *Miscellany Accounts*, 109–19.

<sup>460</sup> *Ainstable in 2011*, 6.

<sup>461</sup> Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Cumberland and Westmorland* (reprint 1992), 59; Hyde and Pevesner, *The Buildings of England: Cumbria*, 91; cf. Monuments.

In the church there are several reminders of earlier times in a number of medieval monuments and fragments. In the floor of the chancel below the altar steps and abutting the north wall is a red sandstone cross slab in a state of advanced decay. Collingwood in 1923 dated it to c.1390 but sketches and engravings made in the 18th century show a partly transcribed inscription and the arms of the Denton family of Cardew who held the manor of Ainstable from the reign of Edward II until Henry VI (1422–71), confirm it as from the grave of a John Denton.<sup>462</sup>

Set against the north and south walls of the chancel are two effigies, the one on the north is probably of William Denton and the one on the south of Katherine Denton his wife who died in c.1428, the effigies are said to have been removed from St Cuthbert's church in Carlisle when that church was rebuilt in 1778.<sup>463</sup> Behind the effigy of William Denton are three stone fragments. Lying horizontally on a side is a decorated stone slab 100 x 18 x 12.5 cm, with an inscription of two lines (yet to be transcribed and translated). On top of the slab is a tapered stone 59 x 49 x 46 base cm, with what appears to be a closed helmet with a bird arising, probably a Phoenix.<sup>464</sup> At the east end of the slab is a rectangular stone 39 x 39 cm with chamfered recesses at each corner and a raised circle enclosing a quatrefoil with a rectangular

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<sup>462</sup> Peter Ryder, *The Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Cumbria* (CWAAS, Extra Ser. XXXII, 2005), 132–33; Denton, *History*, 86–8; Denton, *Perambulation*, 323.

<sup>463</sup> Richard Gough, *Sepulchral Monuments in Great Britain*, vol II, pt II (London, 1786–96), 150; *VCH Cumb.*, II, 211–12; Ryder mistakenly says the effigies are of John Aglionby and his wife but the inscription on the base slab of the female effigy clearly says Katherine Denton, whose husband was William Denton, see Graham, 'The Family of Denton', *CW2*, xvi (1916). Summerson, *The Aglionbys*, 121 also says the effigies are of Dentons and were moved by Christopher Aglionby when he was laying out the gardens and river walks.

<sup>464</sup> Graham, 'Nunnery', *CW2*, xvii (1917), 1–15, the arms in the grotto are on page 15; also Graham, 'Analysis of the Denton Pedigree', *CW2*, xxxiv (1934), 1–16.

block in the centre on which has a coat of arms with three martlets on three bars, the arms of Denton. Behind Katherine Denton there is a tapered stone 33 cm top x 87 x 25 cm base, with an effigy holding a shield and separate crude effigy of what maybe a hare minus its head, 40 x 32 cm. These pieces probably came from St Cuthbert's and may have been at one time in a grotto at Nunnery.<sup>465</sup>

The piscina mentioned earlier is 28 x 28 cm square, 62 cm high and mounted on a 19cm diameter carved column and described as Norman by Pevsner. It may have been in the medieval church but more probably also came from St Cuthbert's. Ryder also points out a carved stone without any inscription in the north wall of the churchyard which he suggest may have been a grave marker but of uncertain date. The only other mentions of the church during the medieval period are by a vicar and a parishioner who wished to be buried in the churchyard.<sup>466</sup>

After the visitation by bishop William Nicolson in 1703, it appears the church deteriorated further as in 1814, Walter Fletcher found the church 'very old and the interior of the Chancel in a most shocking and disgraceful state.'<sup>467</sup> He recommended rebuilding both and in 1817 was pleased to find the church rebuilt but was disappointed that the chancel was in the same state, he goes on to say that Mrs Bamber, Mr Ross and the vicar were in disagreement about

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<sup>465</sup> Graham, 'Nunnery'. The effigies of John Aglionby (?) and Katherine Denton are described with sketches in Rev Canon Bower, 'Effigies in the Diocese of Carlisle', *CWI*, xv (1899), 417–19.

<sup>466</sup> Cf. 'Descent of the Advowson and Clergy'.

<sup>467</sup> *Diocese of Carlisle*, 201–04.

their shares of the maintainance and after many arguments Mrs Bamber paid half and Mr Ross and 'Mr' Smith each paid a quarter.<sup>468</sup>

By September 1828 when Bishop Percy visited the church the chancel had been repaired.<sup>469</sup> But by 1871 the parishioners were saying the church was 'insufficient and inconvenient for the decent and comfortable accommodation of the inhabitants,' although it had seating for 161 worshippers. The vicar John Francis Morton, churchwardens James Robson, John Mulcastre, and patron Charles Fethestonhaugh, sought a faculty to pull it down and use the materials for the erection of new church seating 211, the cost to be met for by voluntary subscription with no rate or assessment on the inhabitants of the parish.<sup>470</sup>

The new church was designed by George Watson with the tower so admired by Borderer and completed in 1872 at a cost of £2000, however the tower was poorly built and became a long standing cause for concern. The main body of the church survived better but the exposed position was open to the prevailing weather systems from the south west. After severe storms in the winter of 1933–4 extensive repairs were needed to the church as a whole and in August 1934, a fete was held at Armathwaite Hall to raise the money.<sup>471</sup> The money raised was not sufficient, for in 1935 Col. T. Fetherstonhaugh of Kirkoswald wrote to the archdeacon of

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<sup>468</sup> The memorial to Mrs (Elizabeth) Bamber is in the chancel, c.f. Monuments

<sup>469</sup> *Diocese of Carlisle*, 204.

<sup>470</sup> CAS (C), PR/96/15–20. The *faculty* jurisdiction is the *Church of England's* regulation of works to church buildings, their contents and churchyards. A faculty is a licence to carry out works.

<sup>471</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 28 Aug. 1934; the edition of Tuesday, 20 Feb. 1934, refers to a severe storm on 15 Feb. 1934 and to previous ones in the preceding weeks, which caused widespread damage.

Carlisle expressing concern about the condition of the church saying it must be ‘getting near being a dangerous building within the meaning of the Act’ and doubted if there was ‘money in Ainstable’ to pay for repairs.<sup>472</sup> His concern was noted and in July 1937 a faculty was requested by the vicar Edgar Bell and the churchwardens Arthur Longrigg and Maurice Hodgson, for strengthening and repairing the tower, H. L. Hicks of Newcastle-Upon-Tyne prepared the drawings. A further faculty was requested in 1938 by the vicar Edgar Bell and churchwardens, to close the church during the work and to hold services in the Church Institute.<sup>473</sup> Anxiety over the condition of the tower continued as noted by the archdeacon on a visitation on 29 September 1940, he also suggested the churchyard needed extension and complained about ‘wholly useless candlesticks’ in the chancel which he suggested were ‘given to the nation for scrap.’<sup>474</sup>

The work on the tower appears to have been unsatisfactory, as in October 1957, settlement cracks were noted in several places in the church fabric and the buttresses to the tower were not adequately joined to the walls.<sup>475</sup> These faults were recorded again in surveys of 1963 and 1968 with the additional problem of woodworm in some timbers. By the time of the 1977 report the signs of settlement were more widespread, the woodworms had extended their territory and the heavy slates, according to the vicar, ‘lift in the wind’. The tower was in a ‘dangerous condition with many structural cracks’.<sup>476</sup> This last report prompted a more detailed survey of the tower which revealed instability in the upper and lower sections and a

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<sup>472</sup> CAS (C), DRC 54/3.

<sup>473</sup> CAS (C), PR/96/15–20.

<sup>474</sup> CAS (C), DRC 54/3; a faculty to acquire new brass candlesticks was granted in 1948.

<sup>475</sup> CAS (C), DRC54/3, Initial Quinquennial Report.

<sup>476</sup> CAS (C), DRC 54/3; quinquennial, every five years.

faculty was obtained to demolish it and build a stone porch. The vicar John Maurice Allen and churchwardens John James Scott and Michael Rowes, also asked for a facility to sell the clock. Finally in June 1984, instructions to design and supervise the construction of the bell-cote were given to Nichol Armstrong Lowe of Carlisle.<sup>477</sup>

### *Memorials*

On his visit to the church on 30 September 1814, William Fletcher noted that ‘the Aglionby Family bury in it’, and indeed memorials to various Aglionbys fill the walls of the chancel and nave. The oak screen in the chancel arch is also a memorial to an Aglionby.<sup>478</sup> There are also six memorials to non-Aglionbys, one on the east wall of the south transept to John Dixon of Ruckcroft (d. 1862), and his wife Hannah (d. 1867). On the west wall of the transept is a memorial to Joseph Dixon of Low Plains (d. 1854), his wife Jane (d. 1862), and their son George (d. 1877).<sup>479</sup> On the north wall close to the chancel arch is a memorial to Rowland Marshall Wilford, who died aged 28 years in Poona, India, in 1903, he was the brother of the Reverent Wilford, then vicar of Ainstable.<sup>480</sup>

The three memorials to Aglionby relations are those to John Yates of Jefferson County, United States, who died at Nunnery in 1854 while visiting the Aglionbys; John Yates Beale a

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<sup>477</sup> CAS (C), PR 96/119.

<sup>478</sup> For a history and development of smaller church monuments see Bob Speel’s website <http://www.speel.me.uk/gp/chmonsintro.htm>, accessed 10 July 2024. The Church Monument Society website is less informative and has only seven churches from Cumbria, including Holm Cultram Abbey, Lanercost Priory and Carlisle Cathedral, listed in the index.

<sup>479</sup> There is no property ‘Low Plains’ in Ainstable but are farms of that name in Lazonby, (NW495416, shown on the 1842–52 OS 6-Inch Map) and Hesket-in-the Forest (NY 495 417).

<sup>480</sup> See cf. ‘Descent of the Advowson and The Clergy’.

captain in the Confederate Army, who was executed by ‘the enemies of his country’ on 24 February 1865; and Charles Fetherstonhaugh, who married Jane Aglionby, daughter of Francis (Yates) and Mary Aglionby, and died 10 January 1885. These monuments span the period of the demolition of the old church 1814–17 and the rebuilding of 1873.

Three memorials are registered in the War Memorials Register at the Imperial War Museum: that to John Beale Yates; the memorial on the south wall of the chancel to Major Arthur Hugh Aglionby who died of his wounds on 7 November 1918, four days before the Armistice on 11th November, and the memorial to Lt. Rowland Marshall Wilford (cf. *The Clergy*).<sup>481</sup>

The fine oak screen between the nave and the chancel was denoted by Colonel Arthur Aglionby (Cooper), in memory of his wife Elizabeth Aglionby Aglionby who died 4th February 1885.<sup>482</sup> The four lancet East window erected in July 1877, is a memorial to Jane (née Aglionby) wife of Charles Fetherstonhaugh of Staffield Hall. A card on the notice board ascribes the glass which is unsigned, to William Wailes.<sup>483</sup> The three lancet stained glass West Window also unsigned, is another Aglionby memorial denoted by Elizabeth Elizabeth Aglionby to her husband Charles Fetherstonhaugh who died 10 January 1885 and ascribed possibly to Mayer of Munich.<sup>484</sup> On the west south side of the chancel is a two light memorial

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<sup>481</sup> For John Beale Yates see *Wikipedia*.

<sup>482</sup> Arthur Cooper changed his name to Aglionby on marriage.

<sup>483</sup> Seen September 2019.

<sup>484</sup> The source for this information is not acknowledged, it is not listed in E. W. Hodge, ‘Stained Glass of the Nineteenth Century and Later in the Diocese of Carlisle’, *CW2*, lxxvi (1976), 200–13. William Wailes (1808-1881) set up his stained-glass business in Newcastle and is credited with glass in eleven Cumbrian churches, after he died in 1881 his son and son-in-law trading as Wailes and Strang, continued making stained glass until 1910. According to Hodge, Mayer of Munich who are still in business, are responsible for the stained glass in

window to Frederick Darley Morton, an infant, who died 27 January 1876 and also ascribed to Wailes.<sup>485</sup> The single light window on the east south side has no dedication and is ascribed to Claydon and Bell.<sup>486</sup>

Two wall monuments have dates of death that predate the rebuilding of the church in 1814–17 and must have been retrieved from the previous church or St Cuthbert’s in Carlisle. The earliest records the death of Elizabeth Aglionby on 27 December 1757 and that of her husband Henry Aglionby, who predeceased her on 7 August 1757. At the bottom of the memorial is an inscription for ‘those of’ (the remains) of Ann, his relict daughter of Sir Christopher Musgrave, Bart, of Eden Hall, who died March 6th 1780.<sup>487</sup> The other monument of similar design records the internment of the ‘children and grandchild’ of Henry and Ann Aglionby, Christopher died 3 October 1783, the last of the male line of Aglionbys, Elizabeth Bamber, widow, died 3 January 1822, Julia Aglionby, died 16 September 1708, and Ann Yates in 1802. At the bottom and below a divider is the name of Richard Bamber, died 17 April 1808, the husband of Elizabeth. As the latest date is that of Elizabeth Bamber the memorial was probably erected at her wish before she died and to include her husband Richard.

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five Cumbrian churches

<sup>485</sup> Infant son of the then vicar John Francis Morton.

<sup>486</sup> The company traded from 1855–1993, see [http://www.thefullwiki.org/Clayton\\_and\\_Bell](http://www.thefullwiki.org/Clayton_and_Bell), (accessed 10 July 2024).

<sup>487</sup> CAS (C), D/HUD/17/88. widow of Sir Christopher Musgrave.



The timber lych-gate at the entrance to the churchyard is the village war memorial.<sup>488</sup> A faculty for a memorial was first requested in 1924 but the structure was not completed and unveiled until early June 1934.<sup>489</sup> The timber is said to have come from HMS Defiance built in 1861 and one of the last of the wooden warships of the Royal Navy which was broken up in 1932.<sup>490</sup> Originally there are twelve names on the memorial tablet of Borrowdale slate but one name was erased after the names were carved. A report of the dedication ceremony gives the original list, James Hilton is the name erased.<sup>491</sup> According to local tradition it is thought James Hilton was killed in the war but later and after the memorial had been completed he returned to the village. Other speculations include possible desertion but the most probable explanation is that names were mixed up and James Hilton was in fact Edward James Hilton whose name is above the erasure.

### *The Organ*

The terrier prepared for the visitation of bishop Samuel Waldegrave in September 1867 lists a harmonium among the possessions of the church.<sup>492</sup> When this was acquired cannot be ascertained but it was moved to the new church in 1872 and is in the inventory of the church made at the visitation of bishop Harvey in 1878. The harmonium continued in use until 1897 when Harrison and Harrison, Organ Builders of Durham, submitted an estimate of £157 for

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<sup>488</sup> NHLE no. 1462530.

<sup>489</sup> CAS (C), DB/6/Plans 71. The file contains a sequence of designs for the porch the earliest being dated 1920; also in the file are two fine pen and ink sketches, one of Ainstable porch but not of the constructed design, and one of the war memorial porch at Skelton which is also a timber lych-gate, where also the church is dedicated to St Michael and All Angels.

<sup>490</sup> *Penrith Observer*, 12 Jun. 1934.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>492</sup> The extant terriers for years 1749, 1867, 1878, 1894, 1908 are in CAS (C), PR/96, that for 1777 is in CAS (C), DBS/4/4/39.

the installation of an organ with 58 notes. Their estimate was accepted as the terrier for 1908 records the organ and it has continued in use until today having a major restoration in 2001 with help from the Pilling Trust and Jean Tinker.<sup>493</sup>

### *Bells*

The bell-cote contains two bells. Nicolson noted two bells on his visit in 1702 and the terrier of 1729 recorded ‘two bells with their frames each thought to weigh two hundredweight’ and rung by levers. The bells had no text inscription but each had the date 1668 inscribed and they must have been the same bells the Rev J F Morton, vicar of Ainstable 1870–87, described to Rev H Whitehead for his article in the *Transactions* of 1888.<sup>494</sup> Morton climbed up and measured each bell himself as he doubtful of their true weight and noted there was a difference of a tone and half between them. In 1893 Miss Sarah Buck of Townhead House paid for the bells to be recast and retuned by Mears and Steinbeck of London, with one bell (on the right in the belfry) inscribed ‘TO THE GLORY OF GOD/AND IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM AND SARAH BUCK 1893’.<sup>495</sup> Just below the shoulder there is another inscription ‘AIMBANK BELL – FOUNDED’<sup>496</sup> In an Inventory of 11 May 1931, the vicar H. F. T. Tilbury, incorrectly recorded ‘Two bells inscribed ‘To the Glory of God and in

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<sup>493</sup> Plate above the key board. The Pilling Trust makes grants to Anglian Churches for maintaining a high standard of church music and the repair and maintenance of church organs. Harrison and Harrison still make organs in Durham.

<sup>494</sup> Rev H. Whitehead, ‘Church Bells in Leath Ward’, *CWI*, ix (1888) 475–94.

<sup>495</sup> *Cumberland & Westmorland Herald*, Sat. 29 July 1893, report of a service in commemoration of the restoration of the two bells. The inscription on the right bell can be partially read from the ground and SARAH BUCK is clearly visible while AM of William can also be seen.

<sup>496</sup> Aimbank is the name of a house at NY528458 first named in 1640: *Place-Names of Cumberland*, Pt I, 170. The rest of the inscription and that on the left bell await reading requiring a ladder for access.

Memory of William and Jane Beck.<sup>497</sup> The bell also has a chip in the rim. The left bell has an inscription below the shoulder but faces east and is not readable from the ground.

### *The Priory*

Although patrons of the vicarage it is unlikely that the nuns of the priory played any significant part in the religious life of the parish. In 1298 Pope Boniface issued decree *Periculoso* which applied the law of enclosure to ‘nuns of every community or order, both collectivity and individually.’ but it is not known if and how the decree was adopted and applied in the diocese of Carlisle or indeed England.<sup>498</sup> All that can be said is that it is assumed that the chaplain to the nuns acted as vicar and possibly as did other nunneries, at times the nuns provided some education for children of the parish.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

### **Manorial Government**

A manorial bailiff (John Thompson, paid 13s. 4d. p.a.) is recorded in 1568.<sup>499</sup> Bailiffs are also recorded in the 1630s, 1707 and 1724.<sup>500</sup> The earliest Ainstable manor courts of which records survive were held in 1605 and 1614 in the name of the king by the royal steward Henry Fetherstonhaugh, and by his son Sir Timothy Fetherstonhaugh from 1633.<sup>501</sup> For the

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<sup>497</sup> CAS (C), PRO/96/58.

<sup>498</sup> Elizabeth Makowski, *English Nuns and the Law in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2011), Ch. 1.

<sup>499</sup> TNA, LR 2/212.

<sup>500</sup> CAS (C), DHN C/1/5, C/1/53, and C/1/624.

<sup>501</sup> TNA, SC 2/165/1 (1605) and LR 11/80/192 (1614); CAS (C), DHN/C/1/5 and C/1/39 (1633f).

period 1605–14, the records are confined to lists of fines: tenants were fined *2d.* for ‘trespass in the king’s mill’; *6d.* for hedge defaults, keeping goats or hounding of sheep; *20d.* for slander, *3s. 4d.* for a pound breach. The courts were held twice a year in May and October. Although mainly concerned with husbandry, the range of offences suggests that these were both Courts Baron and Courts Leet, as also the courts held between 1633 and 1642, of which full records survive. Court rolls from 1683 onwards use the description ‘Court Leet and View of Frankpledge’.

The court roll for 1633, after naming the jurors, dealt first with amercements and included several cases of assault and several of slander, the usual fine for such offences being *3s. 4d.* A fine of *6s. 8d.* was imposed for ‘brewing against the paine’, *6d.* for failure to repair dykes and fences, and £1 for wilful absence from court attendance. After amercements, the court dealt with enrolment of freeholders and admittance of customary tenants.

The manor court rolls from 1633 also recorded the appointment of constables, perhaps the earliest evidence of the transfer of local power in Ainstable from the manor court to vestry (or township) government, to which we now turn.

### **Township Government**

The names of two village constables were recorded on the dorse of the 1633 Ainstable manor court roll.<sup>502</sup> In 1634 two constables were again named, this time at the end of the call roll of

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<sup>502</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/39.

tenants. In 1635 a fine of 20*d.* was imposed for ‘disobeying the king's officers’.<sup>503</sup> In 1637 two constables were named as the first entry on the roll, and in 1638 the equivalent entry (which begins ‘officers’) named two constables and four ‘taskers and prisers’—men appointed, perhaps, to assist the constables to prepare lists of taxpayers liable to pay the newly introduced local land tax known as the ‘Cumberland Purvey’.<sup>504</sup> In 1639 and 1640 the list of officers was extended by two pounders.

The earliest record of the trio of appointed officers (constables, churchwardens and overseers of the poor, two of each) who would together provide the central direction of Ainstable township government for the next 250 years, is found in the Protestation Return in March 1642.<sup>505</sup> It seems reasonable to suppose that, having established the practice of appointing village officers before the Civil War, the township of Ainstable continued to do so, year after year, both during and after the conflict. The court roll of 1706 recorded two sets of constables, frith men and appraisers.<sup>506</sup> No document earlier than 1791 has been found concerning the appointment of overseers of the poor, but it is thought that, like constables, they were appointed routinely year after year from 1642, if not earlier. Overseers accounts (which survive for some years after 1791) record the names of overseers separately for 'high division' and 'low division' and that they served for one year. It seems likely that the offices of overseer (and by implication of constable too) were passed on each year according to a ‘house-row’ system.<sup>507</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/1/5.

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>505</sup> Parliamentary Arch, HL/PO/JO/10/1/82/100.

<sup>506</sup> CAS (C), DHN/C/176/1.

<sup>507</sup> CAS (C), PR96/21.

No comprehensive annual accounts of township expenditure have been found: it is likely that the officers jointly authorised the levy of purvey required to meet expenditure as and when required, including the county precept, upkeep of the church and roads, and poor relief. Land tax duplicates from 1767 give the amounts paid to the county, and overseers accounts from 1791 the level of spending on poor relief.<sup>508</sup>

In each year one constable was appointed from the Ainstable village area, and one from the Ruckcroft area.<sup>509</sup> Thomas Denton, writing in 1686, referred to Nunnery and Ruckcroft as a constablewick;<sup>510</sup> but 18th century county land tax records deal with the township of Ainstable as an undivided district for taxation purposes, the yield of one purvey for the whole township being 10s.<sup>511</sup> Under the later division into high and low quarters, Ainstable High Quarter included the Nunnery estate, and it seems that the concept of high and low divisions was established before the Civil War when village officers were first appointed. It also seems that in appointing two constables, one for each division, from 1633, the Ainstable manor court was projecting its manorial authority into the manor of Ermathwaite.<sup>512</sup>

A post marked 'Ainstable High Quarter' stands by an unmade lane close to Farshield and the eastern boundary of Ainstable, and another marked 'Ainstable Low Quarter' stands beside the road opposite the former Red Lion Inn at Armathwaite Bridge End. There is an 1877 rate

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<sup>508</sup> Above, Social History.

<sup>509</sup> A conclusion based on analysis of their names and where they lived, where known.

<sup>510</sup> Denton, *Perambulation*, 325.

<sup>511</sup> CAS (C), QRP/1/6, Land Tax duplicate 1770, yielding £14 for 28 purveys.

<sup>512</sup> Above, Landownership.

book which lists the principal buildings of the township under the headings 'high quarter' and 'low quarter'.<sup>513</sup> By reference to that an approximate line of division between quarters may be traced from the eastern boundary of Ainstable near Farshield, continuing in a broadly westerly direction through Highdykes and north of Bramery, Ruckcroft and Longdales before swinging northwards towards Bridge End., ending on the River Eden upstream from the bridge. This would place Combe woods in high quarter and Bridge End in low quarter, and makes sense from the point of view of contours, but is at odds with the unexplained inclusion (in the 1877 rate book) of Combes in low quarter.

No records have been found of Ainstable township expenditure on road maintenance. In 1757 Quarter Sessions gave a ruling on 'the common king's highway leading from the market town of Penrith to the market town of Brampton'. This road, which was about 800 yards in length and about five yards in breadth, lay between Armathwaite Bridge and the northern boundary of the parish of Ainstable. The road had been out of repair and there was a dispute about which of two routes it should follow.<sup>514</sup> Having resolved this dispute the magistrates recorded that the road had been repaired by the inhabitants of Ainstable, was now in sufficient repair and would be kept in repair, and ordered that 'this now be the only high road to be repaired by the inhabitants of Ainstable in future'.<sup>515</sup>

Before 1870 water for domestic use in Ainstable was usually obtained from wells. In 1873 the Penrith Rural Sanitary Committee appointed a Parochial Sanitary Committee for

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<sup>513</sup> CAS (C), SPC/56/1/1.

<sup>514</sup> Above, Communications.

<sup>515</sup> CAS (C), Q11/1757/3/1/27.

Ainstable, chaired by George Armstrong of Ainstable Hall.<sup>516</sup> In 1875 Dr Robertson, Medical Officer of Health, raised with the Rural Sanitary Committee a problem with water supplies to Ainstable Towngate;<sup>517</sup> and in 1879 there was a press report that water from the main well in the village was unfit for human consumption.<sup>518</sup>

By that time however the Rural Sanitary Committee's surveyor, George Watson, had presented two reports, 12th February and 21st May 1878, about possible alternative sources of supply and the costs involved.<sup>519</sup> There were several springs which might prove suitable sources for water to be 'laid on at pressure in each house', and the immediate need was to supply Ainstable Towngate. Watson recommended using a spring near Harras of which he said:

*'From an engineering point of view this spring affords facilities for a village supply very rarely to be met with. It issues directly from the freestone rock and is at an elevation 150 ft above Towngate and about 40 ft higher than the vicarage (the highest house in Ainstable) and within 600 yards of the village. The yield of the spring is 60 gallons per minute, an ample supply for 2000 inhabitants whereas the number to be supplied is under 150.'*

Watson added that the supply main would pass the greater part of the village in its route to Towngate, and 'would take the character of a whole village supply'; and that in his opinion Ainstable needed the water supply both as a matter of sanitation and of convenience.<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>516</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/1, p. 40.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>518</sup> *Carlisle Express*, 15 Feb. 1879.

<sup>519</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/1, p. 152.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*



A public meeting was held in the school room on 27th May 1878, chaired by the vicar John Morton. Objections were raised about Watson's proposals, and on 11th February 1879 the Local Government board held an inquiry at Penrith, chaired by Samuel Joseph Smith, an LGB inspector. Watson's proposals were considered, and objections raised again, perhaps because at that stage it was not yet clear that the cost would fall mainly on the households benefiting, and not on the whole township—an issue which was raised by John Morton in a letter to the Local Government Board on 18th March 1879.<sup>521</sup> The scheme was approved, and it was confirmed that the bulk of the cost would be met by owners of properties benefiting and that the balance would 'fall very lightly on the parish'.<sup>522</sup> In June 1879, a loan sanction of £600 was approved by the Public Works Loan Commissioners. In August it was decided to extend the scheme to Townhead Farm, and in December 1879 the water supply to Ainstable Towngate and Townhead was completed.<sup>523</sup> It appears from later records kept by the Penrith Rural District Council (hereafter 'the PRDC') that the 1879 scheme included a reservoir.

### **Post 1894 Arrangements**

The PRDC came into existence in 1895. Responsibility for extending the water supply to the whole of the township now lay with the PRDC, but management of the scheme installed in 1879 would be in the hands of the newly created Parish Council. In 1901 the PRDC approved repairs to the reservoir serving Ainstable water supply.<sup>524</sup> In 1907 it was reported that the 1879 works were in good order and the storage capacity of the reservoir was 2,500 gallons.<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> *Ibid*, p. 231.

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid*, p. 261; words quoted from the vicar's parish magazine August 1879.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid*, p. 288.

<sup>524</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/7.

<sup>525</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/8, p. 277.

In 1908/10 the PRDC developed a water supply to Hesket sourced from Clint Springs in the Pennines above Scarrowmanwick, the water mains being routed through Ruckcroft (where another reservoir was built) and across Armathwaite Bridge.<sup>526</sup> A supply connection to the hamlet of Ruckcroft was approved in 1911;<sup>527</sup> and in 1939 another through Broomrigg, Slack, Bramery and 'the tank'.<sup>528</sup> In 1908 it had been resolved that water taken from the Hesket Main to properties in Ainstable would be charged at the same rates as those connected to the Ainstable waterworks:<sup>529</sup> but in 1910 and 1911 there were complaints from Ainstable about water charges, and a deputation from the Parish Council to the PRDC to press the issue, as a result of which agreement was reached.<sup>530</sup>

From 1906 the PRDC also considered sewage disposal in Ainstable and in 1908 the Medical Officer of Health recommended development of a scheme for the whole village.<sup>531</sup> By arrangement with Edward Ecroyd, lord of the manor of Ainstable, a sewer outfall was created on his land and a manager appointed in 1910.<sup>532</sup> By 1943 this arrangement led to complaints from the tenant of Ainstable Hall farm about pollution of the Hall Beck and sewage soakaways were installed, but a water analyst concluded (after further complaints in 1945) that the water would not be harmful to cattle. Nevertheless, it was predicted that two

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<sup>526</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/9, p. 7; in 2023 this reservoir is easily seen on a hill top near Highdykes.

<sup>527</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/9, p. 260.

<sup>528</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/2/7 (Health Committee, items 128 and 142).

<sup>529</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/9, p. 7.

<sup>530</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/9, pp. 269–70; also *Penrith Observer*, 7th Apr. 1908, 1st Dec. 1908 and 18th May 1909.

<sup>531</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/8, p. 482.

<sup>532</sup> CAS (C), SRDP/1/1/9, p. 180.

expensive sewerage schemes would be necessary for Ainstable in due course;<sup>533</sup> and in 1993 a small sewage works was created near Row.<sup>534</sup>

Four council houses were under construction in Ainstable by the PRDC in 1951 and another four were built in 1954/5.<sup>535</sup>

### **Ainstable Parish Council**

The first steps to create the Ainstable Parish Council were taken on 13th December 1894, at a meeting held at the school presided over by the schoolmaster John Muschamp. The first chairman, elected at the meeting, was Thomas Bowman of Bramery.<sup>536</sup> Muschamp was appointed clerk and treasurer, a position which he held, unremunerated, for 35 years. In 1897 the Parish Council appointed a superintendent of the water works. The Parish Council also appointed trustees to the Dixon and Lowthian charities from 1896, and two governors of the school from 1903.

The level of charges for water was discussed in 1896, 1897 and in 1898, and again in 1910 when the Heskett Main was under consideration. Other regular items were the letting of Bull Close, which the Parish Council owned, and the upkeep of watering places. Demand for a new bridge over Croglin Water at Dale was raised in 1896 and still under discussion in 1905.

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<sup>533</sup> CAS (C), SRDP 1/2/11 (item 71) and 1/2/13 (item 167).

<sup>534</sup> CAS (C), SPC/56/14, pp. 98,102, 115 and inf. Jackie Ellis, clerk of the parish council in 1993.

<sup>535</sup> CAS (C), SRDP 1/2/19, Housing Committee (1951, item 74), and SRDP 1/2/22, Housing Committee (1955, item 39).

<sup>536</sup> CAS (C), SPC/56/11, the first minute book of the Parish Council.

In 1922 Ainstable and Cumwhitton Parish Councils agreed to share the cost of a footbridge over the beck near Beck Brow. In 1929 Muschamp resigned as clerk and treasurer, and J.W. Hope was appointed to succeed him at £5 p.a. In 1934 the parish of Ainstable was combined with the parish of Croglin and a new parish council of 11 members (six for Ainstable, five for Croglin) elected.

From 1934 to 2023 the Ainstable Parish Council continued to meet bimonthly, alternating meetings at Ainstable and Croglin village halls. They raised an annual precept, mainly applied to the salary of their clerk and to grants to support community organisations (including Great North Air Ambulance and the Fellrunner bus service). They responded to planning applications. They sold Bull Close in 1971. They carried out, by canvassing public opinion, a village appraisal in 1991, and by similar processes created a parish plan in 2012. They celebrated the Millennium by supporting the creation of a Millennium Green Trust, and the acquisition (from Whitbreads brewery) of an area of unused land, crossed by Powsey Syke, for a recreational area with children's playground. In 1999 the council was awarded a charter mark in recognition of the standard of service provided, and in 2021 they were awarded the Foundation Level of the Local Councils Award Scheme, the first parish council in Cumbria to receive that award.<sup>537</sup>

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<sup>537</sup> *Cumberland and Westmorland Herald*, 21 Aug. 2021; and inf. Nigel Vear and Beverley Lawson